# HISTORY OF THE AGRAHARAS IN THE ANDHRA COUNTRY

(From the earliest to 1500 A.D.)

Thesis submitted to
SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY
for the award of the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

By
K. SYAMALAMMA

DEPARTMENT OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY CULTURE AND ARCHAEOLOGY
SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY
TIRUPATI 517 502, ANDHRA PRADESH
INDIA

JULY, 1994

**Prof. S. S. Ramachandra Murthy,**
Head of the Department,
Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology,
Sri Venkateswara University
T I R U P A T I - 517 502.

# CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **HISTORY OF THE AGRAHĀRAS IN THE ĀNDHRA COUNTRY** (From the earliest to 1500 A.D.) submitted by **Smt. K. Syamalamma**, for the award of the Ph.D., Degree in Indian Culture is a bonafide research work done under my supervision and that it has not previously formed the basis for any other degree, diploma or other similar title of this University or any other University.

TIRUPATI

DATE : 15 7 94

(S. S. Ramachandra Murthy)
**HEAD**
**Dept. of Ancient Indian History,**
**Culture & Archaeology**
**Sri Venkateswara University**
**TIRUPATI - 517 502 (A.P)**

291722

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
Acc No 291722
Date 6-2-96
TIRUPATI

954.51
SY 13

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was my good fortune to have had as my guide Prof.S.S.Ramachandra Murthy, Head, Department of Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology, S.V.University, Tirupati. It was he who initiated me to the field of Epigraphy. From the time of the choice of the topic, which he himself suggested, till the completion of the work, he had been of endless help at every stage. I am much beholden to him for his parental affection towards me.

I gratefully acknowledge the help and encouragement that I received from Prof.B.Rajendra Prasad, Department of Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology, S.V.University. I was introduced to a fresh and critical approach to the study of History, especially to the present topic, through him, for which I record my heartfelt thanks.

My teacher, Dr.D.Kiran Kranth Chowdary, Reader, Dept. of Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology, S.V.U, had been a source of constant encouragement ever since I was a student of this Department. I thank him for all the help.

I am thankful to Dr.K.P.Rao, Lecturer, Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology, S.V.U. His novel methodology of analysis and recording the data in a scientific way considerably helped me to save a lot of time and energy.

I take this oppurtunity to record my gratitude to Prof.Ajay Mitra Shastry, Head, Dept. Ancient Indian History Culture & Archaeology, Nagpur University, Prof.T.V.Pathy, Dept. of Ancient History & Archaeology, Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, Dr.I.K.Sarma, Director, Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad and the late and lamented Dr.S.P.Tewari, formerly Superintending Epigraphist, ASI, Mysore, for their valuable suggestions and encouragement.

I wish to thank the Director, Epigraphy, ASI, Mysore and his staff for permitting me to collect the data from their Library.

My thanks are due to the Librarian, S.V.University Library and his staff for their help. I also thank the Director, S.V.U. Oriental Research Institute and his staff for permitting me to use their Library.

I thank my husband Sri.P.Krishna Mohan Reddy for his constant help and encouragement.

I express my thanks to my colleagues Smt.R.Madhavi and Sri.G.Sudhakar Naidu for their encouragement.

Finally, I am thankful to M/s. Engineers Point, Amaravati Nagar, Tirupati for computerising the thesis neatly within a short period.

K.SYAMALAMMA

## LIST OF GRAPHS

1. The Frequency of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in Andhra (Upto c.1550 A.D) : P.No : 136.

## LIST OF MAPS

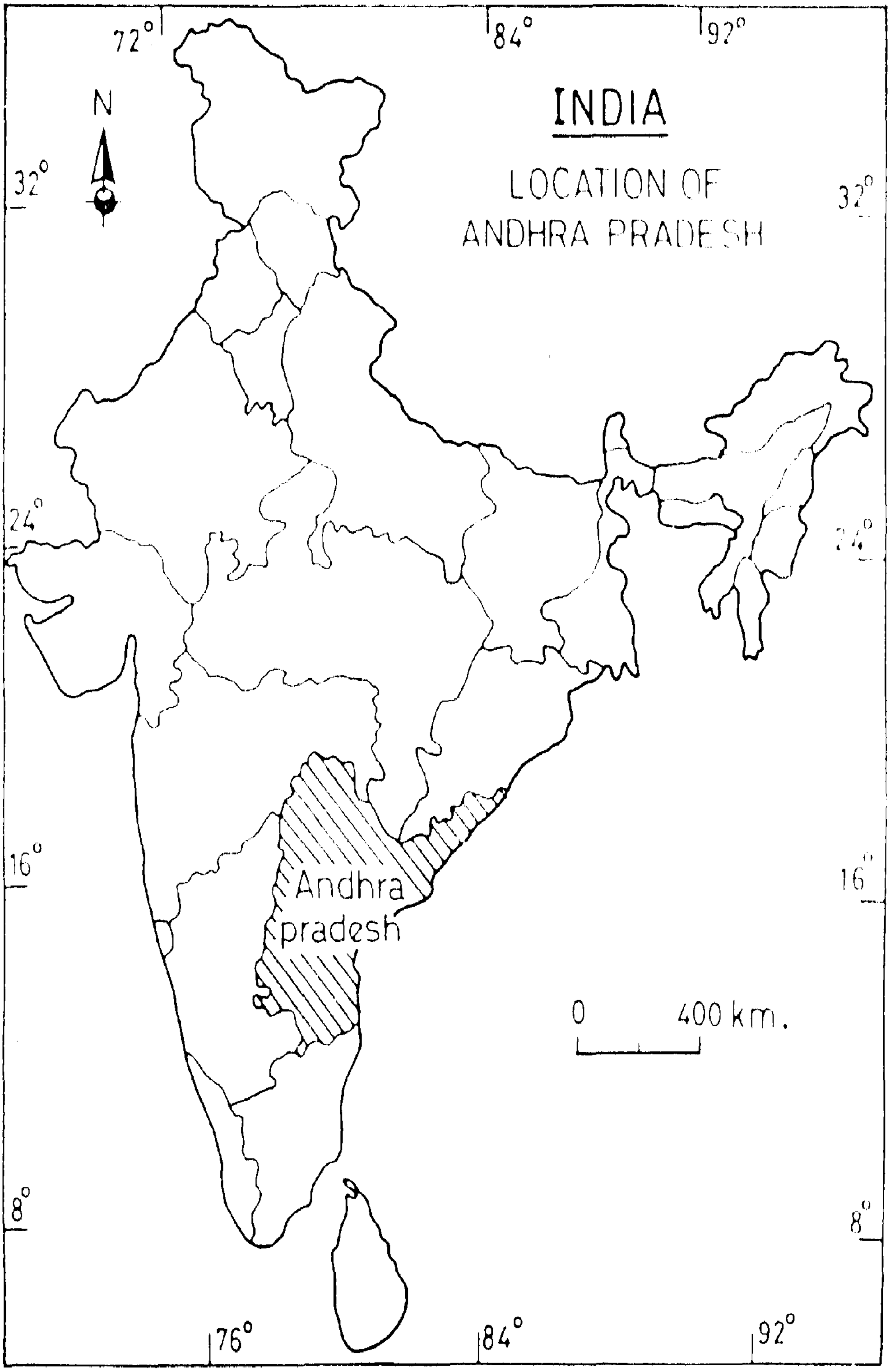
1. The districution of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in Āndhra from the Ikṣvāku period to the Viṣṇukuṇḍin period P.No : 181.

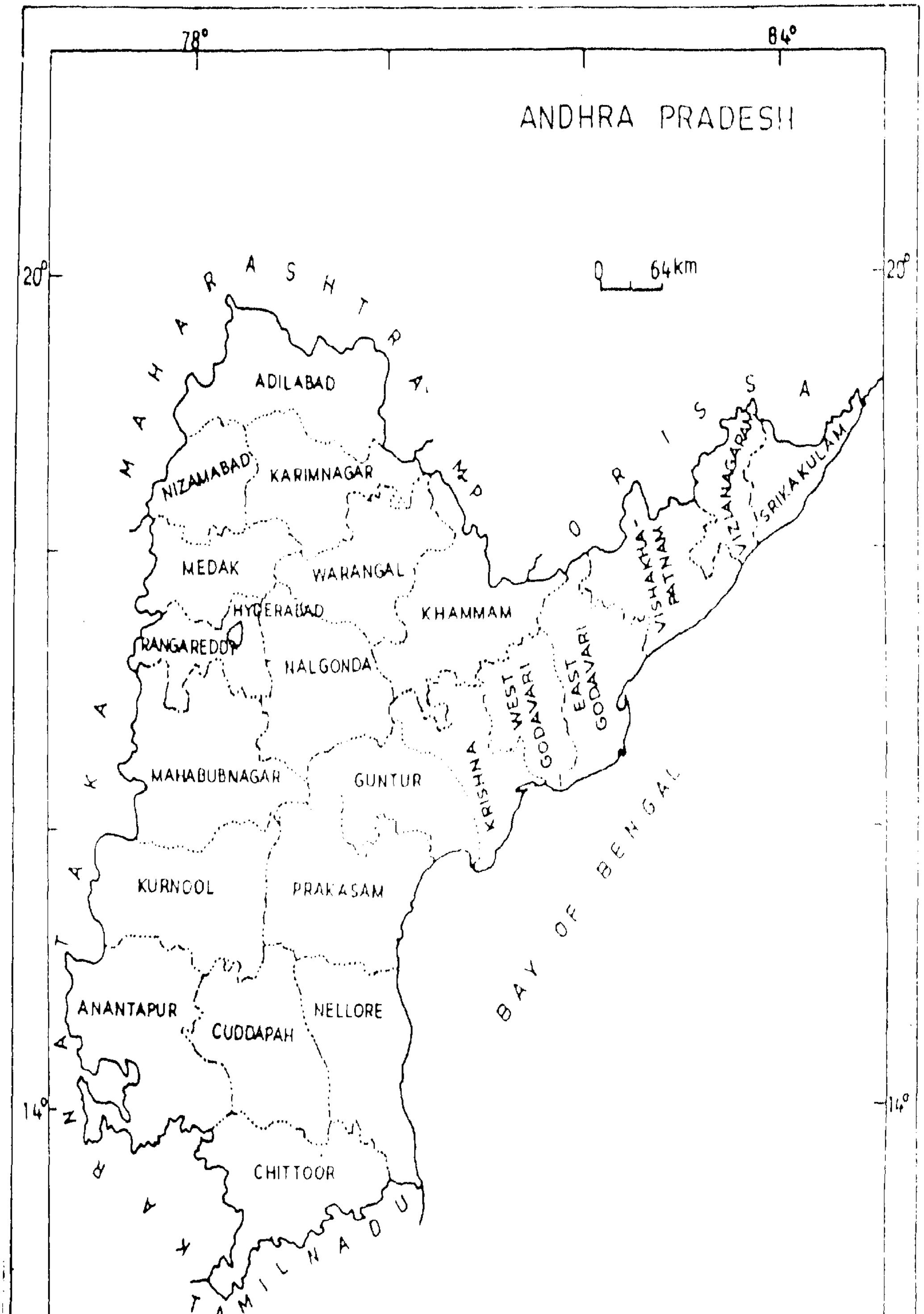
2. The distribution of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in Āndhra from the Eastern Cāḷukyan period to the Reḍḍi period. P.No : 182.

3. The distribution of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in Āndhra during the Vijayanagara period (upto c.1550 A.D). P.No : 183.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED

| | |
|---|---|
| AI | Ancient India |
| ABORI | Annals of Bhandrakar Oriented Research Institute, Poona. |
| APJA | Andhra Pradesh Journal of Archaeology |
| AREP | Annual Reports Epigraphy |
| IA | Indian Antiquary |
| IAR | Indian Archaeology, A Review. |
| IHQ | Indian Historical Quarterly |
| JAHRS | Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society. |
| JBORS | Journal of Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society |
| JIH | Journal of Indian History. |
| JNSI | Journal of Numismatic Society of India. |
| PIHC | Proceedings of the Indian history Congress. |
| PAPHC | Proceedings of the Andhra Pradesh History Congress |
| SII | South Indian Inscriptions |


INDIA
LOCATION OF
ANDHRA PRADESH
N
Andhra
pradesh
0
400 km.
72°
84°
92°
32°
24°
16°
8°
76°



ANDHRA PRADESH
78°
84°
20°
14°
0 64km
MAHARASHTRA
ORISSA
MP
KARNATAKA
TAMILNADU
BAY OF BENGAL
ADILABAD
NIZAMABAD
KARIMNAGAR
MEDAK
WARANGAL
HYDERABAD
RANGAREDDY
KHAMMAM
NALGONDA
MAHABUBNAGAR
GUNTUR
KRISHNA
WEST GODAVARI
EAST GODAVARI
VISHAKHAPATNAM
VIZIANAGARAM
SRIKAKULAM
KURNOOL
PRAKASAM
ANANTAPUR
CUDDAPAH
NELLORE
CHITTOOR

## CONTENTS

LIST OF GRAPHS AND MAPS.

ABBREVIATIONS.

MAPS OF ANDHRA PRADESH.

| | | P.No. |
|---|---|---|
| CHAPTER - I | - INTRODUCTION | 1-30. |
| CHAPTER - II | - FORMATION AND EVOLUTION OF AGRAHĀRA | 31-65. |
| CHAPTER - III | - AGRAHĀRA AND SOCIETY | 66-103. |
| CHAPTER - IV | - AGRAHĀRA AND RELIGION | 104-142. |
| CHAPTER - V | - AGRAHĀRA AND ECONOMY | 143-189. |
| CHAPTER - VI | - SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS | 190-196. |
| SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY | | 197-205. |

# CHAPTER - I

# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

The study entitled **History of the Agrahāras in the Āndhra Country ( From the earliest to 1500 A.D)** seeks to probe into the multifaceted mechanism of the **Agrahāras** in the Āndhra Country from the early times to 1500 A.D. 'Āndhra' in this sense represents the modern Āndhra Pradesh. However, some material pertaining to the border regions of Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Orissa is also utilised. The epigraphical material belonging to the 16th century is also utilised sometimes, to show the significant changes in the institution of Agrahāra in the Āndhra Country. In the present thesis the Dēvāgrahāras i.e. villages donated in favour of temples (not plots of land) are taken for study since the Agrahāra, a Brahmadēya or a Dēvadāya is with reference to the donation of a village or villages. Moreover a village has more meaning and relevance in the analysis of data as it represents a specific unit not only in terms of area, jurisdiction, but also in terms of revenue, population and settlement. Further, the village has a well defined social setup and organisation, such as the **sabha** through which one can study the aspects of society, religion and economy.

Significant contributions were made by scholars like M.Somasekhara Sarma ( **History of Reḍḍi Kingdoms** ),

B.V.Krishna Rao (**The History of the Early dynasties of Āndhradēśa**) to the study of the Agrahāra system. However, they dealt with the aspect in course of their study of the general history of Āndhra and hence lacked specifications regarding the mechanism of the Agrahāra. Similarly the Agrahāra system was briefly discussed by M.Krishna Kumari in her works **the Rule of Chālukya Cōḷas in Āndhra dēśa** and **History of Medieval Andhradesa**. In an article, B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao 'Religion, Politics and Society in Early Deccan' presidential address, IHC, Warangal, 1993 made a brief study of the Brahmadēyas of Āndhra, confining upto the Cāḷukya period. But for these few brief discussions on Agrahāra no serious attempt has been made to study the origin and evolution of Agrahāra and its impact on social, economic and religious structures of the society of the Āndhra Country. It is sincerely hoped that the present thesis will be a humble beginning in this direction.

Some scholars have taken up this aspect while dealing with the history of Karnataka and Tamilnadu. S.Leela Shanta Kumari in her **History of Agrahāras - Karnataka** laid emphasis on the administration and management of the Agrahāras, the Mahājanas etc. The aspects of society and religion were not dealt with in that work elaborately. Burton Stein's

**Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India**, Noboru Karashima's **South Indian History and Society** critically examine some of the aspects of the **Agrahāras**. R.N.Nandi made a detailed study on **Growth of rural economy in early feudal India**,(his presidential address - **Indian History Congress**, 45th session, 1984) which is by far the best pertaining to this topic. It may be noted here that in Āndhra though the number of inscription is high the information supplied by them is not as diverse and detailed as in the cases of the inscriptions of Tamilnadu and Karnataka, making it difficult to arrive at any definite and convincing conclusions.

The impact of the institution of temple on the religio-economic conditions of the society is fairly well-known. In Āndhra the works of K.Sundaram ('The Simhāchalam Temple' Waltaire, 1969) etc. are helpful. The pioneering study made by K.Ismail, **Karnataka Temples, Their Role in Socio-Economic Life** is a significant work in this field. It bears repetition to say that only the Dēvāgrahāras i.e. villages granted to temples were discussed as they throw welcome light on the economy of the temple and in turn the society.

As Agrahāra grants were recorded in inscriptions, naturally, epigraphy forms the basic source material. The

texts of inscriptions from the Mauryan period to Vijayanagara are published in various epigraphical journals like the Indian Antiquary, Epigraphia Indica, Epigraphia Andhrica and other epigraphical works like Epigraphia Carnatica, South Indian Inscriptions Series, Andhra Pradesh Government Archaeological Series, Andhra Pradesh Epigraphical Series, Inscriptions of Nellore District, Cuddapah District, Warangal District, Karimnagar District etc., . The study is mainly based on the data supplied by these works.

Besides a number of books by eminent scholars, journals like the Journal of Indian History, Indian Historical Quarterly, Proceedings of A.P.History Congress, Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India contain many articles on the general history of society, religion and economy pertaining to Āndhra.

An attempt is made in the thesis to present the origin and evolution of Agrahāra in Āndhra from the view points of Social, Religious and Economic perspectives. The thesis is divided into the following chapters.

I . Introduction

II . Formation and Evolution of Agrahāra

III. Agrahāra and Society

IV . **Agrahāra and Religion**

V . **Agrahāra and Economy**

VI . **Summary of Conclusions**

The First chapter, i.e. the present one, is introductory in nature. An account of the source material utilised and its nature is given here. This is followed by a review of the previous works dealing with the present topic. This is concluded by an account of geographical features of Āndhra Pradesh. A brief political history of the relevant dynasties from the earliest times to the Vijayanagara period is given as a backdrop.

The Second chapter entitled **Formation and Evolution of Agrahāra** seeks to understand how the system of the donation of Agrahāra evolved from the gift exchanging system of the Vedic Age. In this chapter the gradual growth of Agrahāra into a religio-economic institution is shown.

The Third chapter, i.e. **Agrahāra and Society**, attempts to present a view of the Agrahāra wherefrom we may learn what it contributed to the social structure. Though Agrahāra in general means a settlement of the Brāhmaṇas, it is obvious that they had to depend upon the non-Brāhmaṇas who included agriculturists, labour, royal officials, village officials,

etc., . This necessitated a kind of harmonious relationship amongst the groups mentioned above for the functioning of the Agrahāra. A study of the caste system and participation of the different strata of the society in the Agrahāra is attempted and the study is chiefly based on inscriptions. The social mobility of different groups, from the facet of Agrahāra, is also examined. The aspect of **Agrahāra and Education** is included in this chapter itself.

The **Agrahāra** and its association with the religion is dealt with in the Fourth chapter entitled '**Agrahāra and Religion**'. Religion was the major motivator for the royal dynasties to donate Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas. The early dynasties like the Bṛhatphalāyanas, Śalankāyanas, Ānandagōtrins, Pallavas, Viṣṇukuṇḍins donated Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas. The temple which became popular from 8th - 9th centuries A.D., as an institution, partially affected the frequency of the Brahmadēyas. Here an examination of the personal religion of the King, the donor, the intention in making a village grant as Agrahāra are taken for study. Similarly the role of auspicious occasions in promoting the Agrahāras is also examined. With the help of these an attempt is made to study as to how far the institution of Agrahāra influenced the growth of the religious sects like Vedic

religion, Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, Jainism and Buddhism from the earliest period to the Vijayanagara times.

'**Agrahāra and Economy**' is the Fifth chapter. It focusses on the economic aspect of the Agrahāra. The features like the ownership, tax exemptions, both partial and full, agiculture and irrigation, etc., are discussed in this chapter. The aspects of creation of new Agrahāras, migrations are also taken for study. To show the importance of land the material from the benedictory and imprecatory portions of the inscriptions is utilised. However the aspects like friction and conflict, and feudalism could not be taken up for study due to the non-availability of sufficient epigraphic data.

A graph showing the frequency of the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras - dynasty wise is given. The distribution of Agrahāras is shown through three maps covering the periods - 1. from the earliest to the Viṣṇukuṇḍin 2. from the Eastern Cāḷukyan to Reḍḍis 3. Vijayanagara. (Upto c.1500A.D.) These three maps indicate the progress of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras from the coastal plains to the Telangāna and Rāyalaseema regions. The Vijayanagara period is represented by a separate map in order to enable scholars to study the growth of the Agrahāra, during that period.

The Sixth chapter embodies Summary Conclusions.

**Geographical features**:

Andhra pradesh as it exists at present was created on 1st November, 1956 under the scheme of Reorganisation of states in India and it lies between 12 40' and 19 50' north lattitude and 76 45' and 84 50' east longitude. It is bounded by on the north by the states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and part of Maharashtra; on the west by Maharashtra and Kartanaka; on the south by Tamilnadu and Karnataka and on the east by the Bay of Bengal.[1]

Andhra Pradesh can be divided into three natural regions, 1.**the Coastal plains** 2. **the Eastern Ghats** 3. **Peneplains**.[2]

1. The **Coastal plains**:- These plains consist of a belt of varying width between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal. Srikakuḷam and Visakhapatnam districts constitute the northern portion of the narrow coastal plains while the south is occupied by Nellore district. The Krisṇa-Godavari Delta lies in between the relatively negative upland and the completely negative coast.

2. **Eastern Ghats**:- These series of detached hill ranges are of heterogenous composition bordering the peneplains plateau in the interior. They widen and reach an elevation of about 900 metres south of the Krishna vally. They continue into the Kondavidu hills. South of Krishna lie the most interesting hills, the Cuddapah ranges and basin. This region forms a great crescent, the heart of it being the wide Nandyal valley drained by the Kunderu river. To the west le Erramalai/Seshachalam hills, Palakoṇḍa hills over-looking the Anantapur and Chittoor districts.

3. The Peneplains:- A peneplain is a land having highly eroded, flat, hillocks scattered all over the surface. The interior of Andhra Pradesh in Anantapur, Kurnool and all the distrists of Telangana, consists of peneplains developed on the Archaen Gneisses.

Rivers: The Kriṣṇa and Godavari are the most important rivers of the state. Both of them flow eastward through the Eastern Ghats to the Bay of Bengal. Both are fed by the two mansoons (South-West and North-East) and are of a perennial type. The others of lesser importance are the Pennar, Vamsadhara and Nagavali. The Godavari, the largest has a total length of 937 miles and has a catchment area of 30,500 square miles. It flows through a length of 450 miles in the state and the

catchment area is 74,600 square miles in Andhra Pradesh. The river Pennar enters Andhra Pradesh and then passes through Cuddapah and Nellore districts. The Vamsadhara and Nagavali enter Andhra Pradesh in Srikakulam district from Orissa.[3]

The important feature of the gerographical setting of Āndhra is, though there were physiographical differences, they did not prevent the region to be inhabited by the Āndhra peole from forming itself into a natural division in a very real sense somewhat complicated, to be sure but nevertheless one intigrated unit. The lands and forests, plains and hills etc. are all connected by age-old routes which coverage on the two rivers namely the Godavari and the Krisna.[4] Economically too the division seems to be one unit, different physiographical regions exchanging their produce along common routes. "Indeed when one considers the soil and geology, the climate and the language of the region as well as the historic and soil situation through the ages, one can hardly help feeling that the Āndhra region has a distinct and tangible personality of its own".[5]

Outlines of Political History:-

A brief historical sketch of the Āndhra Country is given in the following pages to serve as a background to the

study of **Agrahāras** in Āndhra.

**Mauryans**:- By about the 3rd century B.C. itself Āndhra formed a part of the Mauryan empire. The above fact is well-known by the discovery of Erragudi and Rajulamandagiri edict of Aśōka. Some scholars are of the view that soon after the death of Aśōka the Andhras became independent under the leadership of Śātavāhana.[6]

**Śātavāhanas**: According to purānas, thirty kings of this dynasty ruled the Andhra Country for about 450 years.[7]

Simukha or Srīmukha, (c.231 b.C) was the first king and the real founder of Āndhra-Śāthavāhana imperialism. According to D.C.Sircar the reign of Simukha starts from 30 B.C. His son Śātakarni, (c.106-130 A.D) was a great conqueror and his titles **Apratihata cakra** and **Daksinā pathāpati** clearly indicate that he established his undisputed mastery over Deccan. He was the contemporary of Pusyamitra Śunga of Magadha and Khāravela of Kalinga.[8] His predecessors are taken to have been favourably inclined to Jainism and Buddhism, but Śātakarni and his Mahārathi wife Nāgānika championed Vedic **dharma** by performing numerous sacrifices. One of his successors, Sātakarni II appears to have conquered Malwa. During his reign might have started

the protracted Śaka-Śātavāhana conflict which continued with varying fortunes, till the overthrow of the Śātavāhana dynasty.

According to the **purāṇas** pulōma i.e. Vāsiṣṭīputra Pulumāvi ruled for 28 or 29 years. His reign may be assigned to c.130-159 A.D. Pulumāvi's inscriptions have been discovered from Nāsik, Karle in Mahārashtra and Amaravati in Āndhra. According to the Purāṇic list Pulumāvi's immediate successor was Karṇi Śivasrīśāta (159-166 A.D.) who is identified with Vāsiṣṭīputra Śiva srī Śātakarṇi whose coins were discovered in the Kṛṣṇa and Godavari districts.[9] The next rulers according to the Purāṇas were ŚivaskandaŚātakarṇi (160-174 A.D.) and Yajna śrī Śātakarṇi (174-203 A.D.). The city of Vijayapuri is said to have been built by Vijaya-Śātakarṇi and got its name from the same king. Śivaskanda may be Śivamakasata of an Amarāvati inscription. Yajnna Śātakarṇi was a great king who ousted the Scythians not only from Aparānta but probably also from parts of Western India and Narmada valley. The successors of yajnna Śatakarṇi according to some other **purāṇas** were Vijaya (203-209 A.D.), Candraśri or candaśri (209-219 A.D.) and Pulōma (210-227 A.D). With the down fall of the Śātavāhanas Āndhrāpatha passed into the hands of the Ikṣvākus before the

middle of the 3rd century and the Pallavas of Kāñci conquered both Āndhrāpatha and Śātavāhanīya district (Bellari district) before the end of that century.

**Ikṣvākus**: The founder of the Ikṣvāku dynasty was Cāṃtamūla I ( Śāntamāla ) who may be assigned to the 2nd quarter of the 3rd century. He is credited with the performance of **Aśvamēdha** sacrifice indicating his position and faith in the Brāhmaṇical religion. Śāntamūla I was succeeded by his son Māṭhāriputra Vīrapuruṣadatta, who ruled for about twenty years in the third quarter of the third century. The Ikṣvākus had matrimonial alliances with the Śaka kṣatrapas of Western India and Śātakarṇi - Cuṭu, the rulers of Banavāsi in Karnataka. The Buddhist sites like Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta and Nāgarjunakoṇḍa yielded inscriptions of Vīrapuruṣadatta's reign. These records mostly the donations made by royal ladies belonging to his family in favour of the **Mahācaitya** located in Vijayapuri. For the first time temples were built for Śiva and Viṣṇu here during this period. He was succeeded by his son Ehuvula Śāntamūla II who ruled for about 11 years. An inscription from Gurajada, Guntur district, refers to one Mahārāja Rudrapuruṣadatta who was probably the successor of Śāntamūla II. Rudrapuruṣadatta was the last of the Ikṣvākus, who were overthrown by the Pallavas.

**Bṛhatphalāyanas:** Only one king of this dynasty, Jayavarman is known from the Koṇḍamudi grant, issued by the same king, in his 10th regnal year. He is described as a devout worshipper of **Mahēśvara** and as belonging to the Bṛhatphalāyana gōtra. Nothing is known about his predecessors or successors. The Pallavas seem to have overthrown the Bṛhatphalāyanas as well.

**Ānanda gōtras:** Only three kings, Kandara, Attivarman and Damōdaravarman of this dynasty are known from the inscriptions. They flourished in about the second half of the fourth and first half of the fifth centuries A.D.

**Śālankāyanas:** In the Geography of Ptolmy, composed about A.D.140, mention is made of a people called Salankēnoi who inhabited the land to the north of Maisolia or the modern Masulipatam area. Ptolemy's Salankēnoi appear to be none otherthan the Śālankāyanas who are known to have lived in the land between the mouths of the Krisṇa and Godavari with their capital at the city of Vēngī, modern Pedda-Vēgī near Ellore in the Godavari district.[10]

The history of the Śālankāyanas is known from their copper plate charters. These charters were issued both in

prakrit and Sanskrit languages. According to the inscriptional evidences the founder of the dynasty was Hastivarma I (320 A.D.). Inscriptions described him as **nānāprākāra vijayasya, samarāvāpta vijaya, dharmamahārāja** and **samaramukha vikhyāta karma**. Another king Nandivarma I (350 - 385 A.D. ) son of Hastivarma is known from another prakrit inscription of kānukollu. He was succeeded by his brother Vijayadēvavarma. Acaṇḍavarma, the son of Nandivarma I succeeded the throne after 15 years rule of Vijayadēvavarman. He issued the Dhārikāṭura grant in the 35th regnal year as Yuvarāja. This regnal year may be pertaining to Nandivarma I But it is not clear in the inscription. Acaṇḍvarma ruled up to 420 A.D. After the death of Acaṇḍavarman, his son Vijayanandivarma came to the throned. In the internal war between Vijayanandivarma and Vijayaskandavarma, Vijayanandivarma succeeded and united the Śālankāyana Kingdom. Vijayanandivarma appears to be the last king in the Śālankāyanas. Due to the struggle with Māṭharas and Viṣṇukuṇḍins, the Śālankāyana dynasty disappeared in the middle of the 5th century A.D.[11]

**Pallavas**: Simhavarman ( 280 - 310 A.D. ) was the first king in the Pallava dynasty as attested by the prakrit charters. He is described as **Bappabhaṭṭāraka**. He ruled from kanci and

appointed his son Śivaskandavarman as a royal representative on Āndharāpatha. Śivaskandavarman ruled from 310 - 335 A.D. He was succeeded by Viṣṇugōpa ( 335 - 350 A.D. ) who is also referred to in the Alahābad inscription of Samudraguptha. Skandavarman II ( 370 - 385 A.D.) and Vīravarman II ruled respectively after Kumāraviṣṇu. Their successor Vijayaskandavarman III ( 400 - 436 A.D.) was a great warrior who bore the titles like **prajāpālanadakṣa**, **pancamalōkapālaka** etc., . The next kings were Simhavarman II ( 435 - 480 A.D.) and Skandavarman IV ( 480 - 490 A.D.). Simhavarman was referred to as **anēkasamarāvalabdha** vijayayaśa. He regained the territories from the Viṣṇukundins. The successor of Skandavarma, Nandivarman's ( 490 - 500 A.D.) time witnessed a setback for the Pallava rule. Kadambas seem to have defeated Pallavas and even occupied Kāncipuri. Kumāraviṣṇu II ( 500 - 520 A.D.) assisted by his son Buddhavarma ( 520 - 530 A.D.) regained kāncīpuri and rekindled the glory of the Pallavas. The Pālakkaḍa branch of the Pallavas which was initiated by Simhavarma was succeeded by Viṣṇugōpa, Simhavarma who Simhavarma who ruled contemporarily with Kumāra Viṣṇu II and Buddhavarma. Simhavarma ( 550 - 570 A.D.) who was the son of Viṣṇugōpa was responsible for the origin of the Mahāpallavas. He was succeeded by Simhaviṣṇu (570 - 600 A.D.) and Mahendravarman ( 600 - 630 A.D.). During the period of

Mahendra varma, Pulakēsi II invaded the Pallava Kingdom and proceeded upto Kāncīpuri in which Mahendravarma was defeated. By this the rule of the Pallavas over Āndhara came to an end.[12]

**Viṣṇukuṇḍins**: There is a great deal of controversy regarding the genealogy of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin kings. The earliest known of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin family is Indravarma ( 375 - 400 A.D.). He was succeeded by Vikramahēndra ( 400 - 425 A.D.). Gōvindavarman ( 425 - 465 A.D.) married the daughter of Mūlarāja and with their help was able to drive away the Śālankāyanas. He also defeated Pallavas and extended his kingdom upto Gundla kamma. Interestingly Gōvindavarma though a Buddhist by faith also favoured Vaiṣṇavism. Mādhavavarma I who succeeded him ( 465 - 515 A.D.) invaded Vākāṭaka Kingdom and defeated Pṛthvīsēna. Mādhavavarma initiated matrimonial relations with the Vākāṭakas by marrying the daughter of Pṛthvisēna. In his 33rd regnal year Mādhavavarma attacked Pallavas and established his rule upto Gundla kamma. Vikarmēndravarma I ( 515 - 525 A.D.) succeeded him. He is known as **Viṣṇukuṇḍi vākāṭa ka vaṁśa dvayālankāra janma**. During the period of Indravarma ( 525 - 555 A.D.) who was the son of Vikramendravarma I there were continuous internal wars. Mādhavavarma II the cousin of Indravarma seems to have

taken the help of Pulakēsi I. After the death of Indravarma his son Vikramendrabhaṭṭaraka Varma II came to the throne ( 525 - 555 A.D.). Pulakēsi II seems to be responsible for the downfall of Viṣṇukuṇḍins.[13]

**Cāḷukyas**: The disappearance of the Viṣṇukuṇḍins by about the beginning of the 7th century A.D., was followed by the conquest of Āndhra by the Western Cāḷukyas. Cāḷukya Pulakēsin II's conquests over the Āndhra Country had a great political and cultural impact on that region. Kubja Viṣṇuvardhana, the brother of Pulakēsin II, who was placed in charge of the newly acquired coastal region of the Āndhra Country became the founder of the dynasty of the Cāḷukyas of Vēngi. The establishment of the Eastern Cāḷukyan Kingdom marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Āndhras.

Kubja Viṣṇuvardhana (624-641A.D.) was an able king and enjoyed the titles like **Viṣamasiddi** and **Makaradvaja**. He patronised the Vedic religion to a great extent. Kubja Viṣṇuvardhana was succeeded by his eldest son Jayasimha I (641-673 A.D.) whose kingdom was extended from Visakhapatnam in the North to Ongole in the South. Indravarma was the succcesor of Jayasimha I, ruled for seven days. He was

succeeded by his son Visnuvardha II. Like his predecessors he too patronised Vedic scholars. Among his successors Jayasimha II was an important ruler. After him Kokkili ascended the throne and lost his throne within six months after his coronation to his younger brother Visnuvardhana III who ruled for 35 years (718-752A.D.). He was succeeded by his son Vijayāditya who enjoyed the titles like **Mahārājādhirāja paramēsvara, bhattākraka** etc., . His son Visnuvardhana IV came to the rule. Visnuvardhana IV had two sons, Vijayāditya II and Bhīmasaluki. The internal enimity between these two brothers resulted in a prolonged war in which Rāstrakūtas and Gangas supported Bhīmasaluki. Finally Vijayāditya defeated his brother and struck terror in the hearts of the Rāstrakūtas. Then Kalivisnuvardhana the son of Vijayāditya II ruled for 18 months after the death of his father.

Gunaga Vijayāditya, the eldest son of Visnuvardhana, ascended the throne in 848 A.D. and ruled for 44 years. Gunaga Vijayāditya was followed by his brother's son Cālukya Bhīma I. Then Vijayāditya IV, son of Cālukya Bhīma ascended the throne and ruled for six months. He died in a battle while fighting the Kalinga chiefs. Amma II was another important king of the Eastern Cālukya family who came to the

throne in 945 A.D. He ruled for only 12 years and he was killed by his elder brother Dānārṇava. After three years Dānārṇava was killed by Jaṭācoḍa Bhīma and he ruled for 27 years. With the help of Rājarāja I, the sons of Dānārṇava namely Śaktivarma and Vimalāditya regained the Cālukya throne. Then Saktivarma ruled the kingdom for about 12 years. Vimalāditya succeeded his elder brother in 1011 A.D. and ruled for 8 years. Then Vimalāditya's son Rājarāja Narendra came to the throne. After the death of Rājarāja Narendra, Rājendra Cōḷa became the king of both the Cāḷukya and Cōḷa countries with the second name Kulōttunga. Because of his close relationship with the Cōḷas he came to be considered as a Cōḷa king. After that the Cāḷukya kingdom became a part of Cōḷa country.[14]

**Cōḷas**: Kulōttunga I (1070 -1120 A.D.) who was ruling from Gangai - Koṇḍa Cōḷapuram sent his sons to the Vēngi Country as his viceroys. One of the important results of this was an increase in cultural contacts between the Āndhra and Tamil Countries. A great number of Tamilians, particularly Brāhmaṇas, migrated to Āndhra. The Piṭhāpuram plates of Vīracōḍa bears testimony to this. It may be noted that since the Cōḷa capital was located at a far of place, the Velanāṭi chiefs who were serving the Cāḷukyas the cāḷukya - cōḷas

loyally bacame the virtual rulers of Andhara. By about the 13th century the Cōḷa rule in Āndhra came to an end.[15]

**Eastern Gangas**: The history of Kaḷinga becomes clearer from about the end of the 5th century A.D. from which time the Early Eastern Gangas established their authority over this region. The Eastern Ganga Kings who ruled prior to the 11th century dated their copper plate charters in the Ganga era. These kings are considered as Early Gangas. The important Kings of Early Ganga dynasty were Indravarman I (496-535A.D), Hastivarman ( 575 A.D.), Indravarman II ( 587 A.D), Indravarman III ( 624 A.D.), Dānārnava ( 633 A.D.), Indravarman IV (650 A.D.), Dēvēndravarman ( 691 A.D.), Anantavarrman ( 700 A.D.), Nandavarman ( 717 A.D.) and Dēvendravarman II ( 750 A.D.). All these kings issued copper plate charters.

Of the later rulers of the Early Ganga dynasty mention may be made of Rajendra-varman I and his son Anantavarman II known from records dated c.780-782 A.D. Anantavarman II was succeeded by his brother Dēvendra-varman III.( 806-808 A.D.) The successor of Dēvendra varman III was Rājendravarman II (809-840 A.D.). This king was succeeded by his cousin Satyavarman ( 849 A.D.). Another three rulers were Anantavarman III, Bhūpendra varman Mārasimha and his son

Devendra varman IV ( 895 A.D.). No definite history of the Eastern Gangas is available for about a century after Devendra varman IV.

Those who ruled from the 11th century A.D. used Śaka era in their inscriptions and Vajrahasta I was the first king to do so. The King Vajrahasta III or Vajrahasta V, was anointed king in 1038 A.D. and assumed the title Trikaliṅgādhipati. He was succeeded by his son Rāja Rāja I Dēvendravarman, who was crowned in 1070 A.D. Anantavarman Cōḍa Gangadēva was the son of Dēvēndravarma and ascended the throne in 1078 A.D. Kāmārṇava followed Anantavarma Cōḍa Ganga to the throne in 1142 A.D. Kāmarṇava was succeeded by his half brother Rāghava ( 1157-1170 A.D.) After Rāghava his two half brothers Rājarāja II ( 1171-1192 A.D.) and Ananga Bhīma II (1192 A.D.) ruled in succession. Immediate successor was Rājarāja III ( 1206 A.D.). Then he was succeeded by his son Ananga Bhīma III ( 1230-1237 A.D.) Narasimha I in 1238 A.D. succeeded the throne.

Bhānudēva I ( 1264-1279 A.D.), son and successor of Narasimha I was an uneventful one, from political point of view. But during the reigns of Bhānudēva I and his son Narasimha II (1279-1306 A.D.) the great religious teacher

Narahari Tīrtha lived and preached in Orissa, and gave a great impetus to Vaiṣṇava religion which replaced Śaivism as the dominent creed of the Country.

Among the minor dynasties who ruled Rāyalasīma, Vaidumbas deserve mention. It is interesting to note that many of the Vaidumba inscriptions record the death of Valiant persons who fell fighting to rescue the cows being lifted by the enemy chiefs, the Noḷambas. These heroes who fell fighting for social causes were deified and worshipped during this period.[16]

**Kākatīyas**: Bēta I can be considered as the first important king of the Kākatīya dynasty. He was succeeded by his son, **Mahamaṇḍalēśvara** Prōla I. He was succeeded by his son Tribhuvanamalla Beta II (1079-1090 A.D.) Prōla II (1115 A.D.) was the successor of Bēṭa II.

Prōla II was succeeded by Rudra I ( 1162 A.D.). Then Gaṇapati came to the throne in 1199 A.D. and had a long reign of 63 years. Gaṇapatidēva had two sisters, Mailāmba and Kundāṁba, who were actively associated with pious acts like constructing temples and excavating tanks.

Since Gaṇapati had no sons he declared his daughter Rudrama (1258 A.D.) as his successor and associated her with

administration. Rudrama's rule came to an end in 1289 A.D. as is evident from the Candupaṭla inscription. Pratāpa Rudra, the grant son of Rudrama, came to the throne in 1289 A.D. and ruled till 1323 A.D. As is apparent by the Vilasa and Kaluva Cēru grants, for a few years from A.D.1323 the Āndhras suffered untold miseries at the hands of the alien Muslims. However, Annamantri, Kolani Pratāparudra and Rēcarla Singamanāyaka, the surviving generals of the Kākatīya army, took up the task of liberating the Āndhra Country from the clutches of the Muslim rulers.[17]

**Reḍḍis**: Among the Reḍḍi Kings Prōlaya Vēma Reḍḍi was the first king. According to some sources he ruled for few years as a subordinate to Pratāpa Rudra, and later became an independant. According to Maṇikēsvara inscription, Prōlaya Vēma ruled upto 1353 A.D. He had the titles of **sōmapāna Anavaratapurōhitakṛta Dharmapratiṣṭāguru** etc. After the death of Prōlayavēma, his son Anavōta ( 1353 -1364 A.D.) ascended the throne. During his reign he transferred the capital from Addanki to Koṇḍavīḍu. He was succeeded by his brother Anavēmā Reddi in 1364 A.D. He ruled the country upto 1386 A.D. Kumāragiri, son of Anavōtā Reḍḍi came to the throne in 1386 A.D. and ruled upto 1402 A.D. Pedakōmaṭi Vēma Reḍḍi succeeded Kumāragiri and ruled upto 1420 A.D. Rāca Vēma (

1420-1424 A.D.) was the last king of Reḍḍs of Koṇḍavīḍu. Another branch of Reḍḍi kings from Rajamahēndravaram begun its rule with Kāṭaya Vēma ( 1395-1414 A.D.) followed by Kumāragiri II (1414-1416A.D.), Kumarāgiri III and Anavōtā Reḍḍi III succeeded him and ruled upto 1423 A.D. Vīrabhadra Reḍḍi seems to be the last king in this branch (1423-1448 A.D.), when Kapilēsvara Gajapati invaded the Reḍḍi Kingdom. The Kandukuri branch of the Reḍḍi kings are known from the inscriptions of Mallareḍḍi beginning from 1324 A.D. His grandsons Śri Giri and Māca Reḍḍi defeated Firojshah in 1398 A.D. when the Bahamani Sultan waged a war in Kandukūru. Śri Giri was Succeeded by Kōmaṭi Reḍḍi II who was the son of Māca Reḍḍi.

The Vijayanagara Kings consolidated their position and the Kandukūru branch of the Reḍḍi Kings became their feudatories in the time of Kōmaṭi Reḍḍi III who was also the son of Śri Giri Reḍḍi.[18]

The Reḍḍi period is remarkable as they revived the Agrahāras that were destroyed by the Muslims.

**Vijayanagaras**: Harihara I and Bukka I were the founders of Vijayanagara empire. They belonged to ~~Sāḷuva~~ SANGAMA dynasty. They extended their kingdom in the South east to Dharwar and

Bādāmi in northern Karnataka. Harihara was crowned in A.D.1336 and ruled upto 1356 A.D and to commemorate the event he laid the foundations of his new capital city Vijayanagara. Bukka I succeeded Harihara I in 1356 A.D. and ruled upto 1377 A.D. Bukka I died about the begining of 1377, and Harihara II immediately ascended the throne. He fell ill in the later part of 1403 A.D. and died in 1404, having ruled for a period of twentyeight years. On the death of Harihara II, the succession to the throne was disputed his three sons Virūpākṣa I, Bukka II and Dēvarāya I laid claim to the throne. Though the struggle for succession lasted for two years, much is not known about the course of events during the period. Virūpāṣa I appears to have crowned himself immediately after the death of his father, but his role came to end after one year. He was probably over thrown by Bukka II who proclaimed himself king. He, in his turn, yielded place to Dēvarāya I, who ascended the throne in 1406 A.D. and ruled upto 1422 A.D. Rāmacandra and Vijaya I were associate rulers of Dēvarāya I. But the actual hero was Dēvārāya II. Though he was associated with his father in the administration of the kingdom since 1422 A.D, the exact date of his coronation is not known. His rule came to an end in 1446 A.D. The political situation at Vijayanagara immediately

after the death of Dēvarāya II is not definitely known. Though it is generally assumed that his son, Mallikārjuna, succeeded him on the throne it is evident from literary and epigraphic evidence that both Vijaya II and Mallikārjuna for some time ruled the empire simultaneously . Mallikārjuna died in the middle of 1465 A.D. and Virūpākṣa II, cousin of Mallikārjuna came to the throne immediately after the death of Mallikārjuna. He was murdered about the end of the 1485 A.D. by one of his sons and Prauḍha Dēvarāya ascended the throne. A powerful vassal Sāluva Narasimha expelled Praudharāya from the throne, and declared independance. He died early in 1490 A.D. and was followed by Narasa Nāyaka who ruled upto 1503 A.D. He was succeeded by his eldest son Vīranarasimha, the first ruler of Tuluva dynasty who ruled for only five years. He was succeeded by his half-brother Kṛiṣnadēvarāya who was a great administrator and a mighty warrior. His reign was remarkable in the history of Vijayanagara. He ruled upto 1529 A.D. Kṛṣnarāya was succeeded by his brother Acyuta who ruled upto 1543 A.D. After Acyutarāya, the important rulers of the Vijayanagara dynasty were Sadāśivarāya and Tirumala. In 1568 A.D. Tirumala ascended the throne by killing Sadāśivarāya. Tirumala was succeeded by his son, Sri Ranga I in 1572 A.D. Sri Ranga was followed by his brother Venkata II in 1576 A.D. Venkata II

died in 1614 A.D. The last king of this dynasty was Sri Ranga III after him the empire dwindled in size and importance and it was finally destroyed by Tipu Sultan who set fire to Ānegondi in 1786.[19]

## Notes and References


1. **Census of India**, 1961, Vol.III, Andhra Pradesh, Part IX, State Atlas, P.1.
2. **Ibid**, P.7.
3. **Ibid**, PP.9-10.
4. Amita Ray, **Life and Art of Early Āndhradēśa**, Delhi, 1983 P.2.
5. **Ibid**.
6. B.S.L.Hanumanth Rao, **Religion in Āndhra**, P.20, Hyderabad, 1993.
7. **Nanaghat inscription of Nāgāniká**.
8. K.Gopālachari, **Early History of the Andhra Country**, Madras, 1941.
9. D.C.Sircar, in, R.C.Majumbdar, Ed **The Age of Imperial Unity**, Vol II, Bombay, 1988.
10. **Ibid**.
11. B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, **Āndhrula caritra**, Guntur, 1989.
12. **Ibid**.
13. **Ibid**.
14. R.C.Majumdar, Ed. **The Classical Age** Vol.III, Bombay, 1988; **The Age of Imperial Kanauj**, Vol.IV, Bombay, 1984; **The struggle for Empire**, Vol.V, Bombay, 1979.
15. **Ibid**, Vol.V.

16. Ibid, Vol.III, IV & V.

17. Ibid, Vol.VI.

18. B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, Op.cit

19. R.C.Majumdar, Ed. Op.cit, Vol.VI

# CHAPTER - II

# FORMATION AND EVOLUTION OF AGRAHARA

## Formation And Evolution Of Agrahara

**Agrahāra** is generally **taken as a village** or settlement donated in favour of the **Brāhmaṇas**. The term Agrahāra has been interpreted differently by various scholars. The first part, i.e., **Agra means** foremost, first, chief and so on. The second part, viz. **hara** is taken by some scholars to have been derived from the sanskrit word **hṛ**, meaning to take away. Others have taken the second part to be **Āhāra**. Leela Shanta Kumari has dealt with various interpretations[1] as given below.

D.L. Narasimhachar takes the term **āhāra** to mean a territorial division.[2] J.C.Joshi derives the word **Agrahāra** from **Agra**, i.e., first or prior and **hṛ** i.e. to take, and states that the term would mean 'one who takes or collects king's share', taking **Agra** in the sense of **Agrabhāga**, i.e. king's share and the term Agrahāra, a place of business or headquarters of the **Agrahāra** or the **Agrahārin**. Thus **Agrahārin** has been interpreted to mean an officer like **Mahattama** of the later times.[3]

It may be noted that the term **Āhāra** occurs in many inscriptions in the sense of a territorial division

like Viṣaya, Nāḍu, Maṇḍala, etc. as for instance Sātahānihāra.[4]

D.C.Sircar thinks that a division was known as **Āhāra** because it fetched revenue.[5] Here it may be noted that a province in general was also known as **bhukti**, in the sense of **Āhāra** both perhaps indicating a kind of revenue mostly from agriculture, since **Āhāra** and **Bhukti** indicate food and food grains. It was probably in this sense that an **Āhāra** which was inhabited by the Brāhmaṇas- the **agra** [viz. the foremost or chief] was to become **Agrahāra**.

Kittel[6] has taken the word **Āhāra** to mean food or livelihood, and hence it may be interpreted as land or a village granted for food, for the **Agras** i.e. the foremost viz., the learned Brāhmaṇas. According to Altekar, the Agrahāras were settlement of Brahmadēya colonies in villages exclusively assigned to them for their maintenance.[7] C.Meenakshi opines that 'when a whole village was settled in by a number of learned Brāhmaṇas it was commonly known as an Agrahāra.[8] K.V.Ramesh, on the basis of some copper plate charters from Madhya Pradesh datable to 4th-5th centuries A.D., observes that "while the grants made to the deities are referred to as **Dēvāgrahāra**, those made to the Brāhmaṇas are mentioned as **Brahmadēya**,

**Agrahāra**, **Brahmadēyakul-āgrāhāra**, **Brahmadēyāgrāhāra**, **Chāturvidy-āgrāhāra**".[9] He proceeds to remark, "it is interesting to note that the spelling uniformly occurs in these plates as **Agrāhāra**, providing clinching evidence to the effect that the more popular form of **Agrahāra** is but a later variation and that the word originally built from **agrāhāra**, to indicate lands donated for the livelihood of the Brāhmaṇas.[10]

Studies by scholars like **Romila Thapar**[11] and Leela Shanta Kumari[12] **have shown that the** origins **of the Agrahāras are in fact traceable from the very early times.** Romila Thapar **has conclusively established that the concept of dāna** and **dakṣiṇa** of the Vedic period **gradually** led to the gifting of fields/lands to the **Brāhmaṇas** by the **Kṣatriyas**. Jogiraj Basu[13] and R.N. **Sharma**[14] **have also shown an** early origin of the gift concept. It is necessary here to review Romila Thapar's findings in brief in order to understand how the concept of **dāna** and **dakṣiṇa** slowly transformed into an Agrahāra.[15]

Gift giving has been seen largely in the context of its association with religion, ritual and symbolism. The other aspects are changing items included in the listing

of **dāna** and the correlation of these items with economic change. Secondly, the degrees to which the nature of gift giving reflects the socio-economic structure of society.[16] The earliest references to **dāna** as a distinct function in society are traced to the **dāna-stuti** hymns of the Ṛg-veda, hymns in praise of those who make generous and handsome gifts.[17] The gifts made to the Brāhmaṇa priests by Rājanya/Kṣatriya during this period were primarily cows, and horses; other gifts include wagons, chariots slave girls/maidens, camels, treasure-chests, garments and robes, measures of gold and infrequently, cauldrons of metal.[18] Among the gifts there is a noticeable absence of the mention of the land quite evidently, since it was cattle that was synonymous with wealth. Despite the references throughout the Ṛg-veda, land was still seen in essence as territory encompassing both fields and grazing ground. The lifting of cattle was a more serious economic problem than trespassing into fields.[19]

The literature of the later vedic period, as pointed out by Romila Thapar, gradually introduces the change in the concept of **dāna**. She has studied the **dāna and dakṣiṇā** in the perspective of exchange. Here the appropriateness of the

gift and the faith with which it is given are emphasized and the place and time are made much more precise. This is done by a closer linking of gift-giving with the sacrificial ritual via the **dakṣiṇā**.[20] The justification for **dāna** is also spelled out. We are told that there are two types of **dēvatas**, the gods and the Brāhmaṇas learned in the **Vēdas**; both have to be propitiated, the former through **yajñas** and the latter through **dāna**.[21] It is also at this point that there is mention of fields and villages as appropriate items of **dāna**, although these references are as yet infrequent.[22] It is also interesting to note that the **Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa** (7-35-3) mentions receipt of gifts, drinking of **sōma**, moving at will, smartness and optional submission to the king as marks of a Brāhmaṇa indicating that Brāhmaṇas by this time were more dependent on gifts and sacrifices.[23] According to Romila Thapar during this period there was a relative decline of livestock breeding and increase of agriculture.

**Dakṣiṇas** associated with particular royal rituals as part of the major sacrifices often consisted of gifting to the priest the most valuable objects used in the ritual. The **Athvaryu** and **hotṛ** who recite the legend of **sunahsēpa** at

the **rājasūya** are given the golden seats on which they sit for the recitation in addition to a certain number of cows.[24] It is also in connection with the sacrifice that one of the forms of **dakṣiṇā** listed is that of **catuṣpat kṣētra** (field with four parts) which is given to a priest.[25] Romila Thapar thinks that as there are not too many references to Brāhmaṇas owning land or large heads of cattle it is likely that the **dakṣiṇā** from the king would often be the basic source of livelihood for those performing the rituals.

As we enter the Epic period, in the **Anuśāsana parvan** of the **Mahābhārata** we find a further elaboration of the categories of **dāna**. The **pūrta** unlike **iṣṭa** is a larger enterprise and consists of the donation of wells, tanks, temples, gardens and lands.[26] The donation of immovable property as a special category is a relatively new concept and points clearly to the establishment of agricultural economy where wells, tanks, gardens and land have a utility which they would not have had in a pre-eminently pastoral economy.[27] This is how Romila Thapar has linked the **dāna** and **dakṣiṇā** concept with the land grants. Marcel Mauss points to the **Anuśāsana parvan** as the section par excellence devoted to gift-giving.[28]

Here as noted above we find a further elaboration of the categories of **dāna**. The distinction for example between **iṣṭa** and **pūrta** is emphasized. The iṣṭa is that which is offered into the **gṛhya** and srauta ritual fires. **Pūrta** is a larger enterprise and consists of the donation of wells, tanks, temples, gardens and lands.[29]

The **Arthaśāstra**, commenting on the formation of villages prescribes that " those who perform sacrifices (**ṛtvik**) and spiritual guides, priests, and those learned in the vedas shall be granted **Brahmadēya** lands yielding sufficient produce and exempted from taxes and fines (**adaṇḍa karāṇi**).[30] It is very important to note that the **Arthaśāstra** further states that apart from Brāhmaṇas" superintendents, accountants, **gōpas**, **sthānikas**, veterinary surgeons (**anīkastha**), physicians, horse-trainers, and messengers shall also be endowed with lands, which they shall have no right to alienate by sale or mortgage.[31] Kautilya also provides for the allotment of forest-land for **sōma** plantation and austerities to Brāhmaṇas.[32] Here even the method of measuring of such lands is specified.[33] R.N.Sharma terms the gift of lands to the Brāhmaṇas as royal grants.[34]

Now let us turn to Buddhist literature to know what it says regarding village grants to Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas according to Buddhist literature, lived in villages called **Brāhmaṇagāmas** in which they formed the dominant element in economic life as well as in population.[35] Some of them such as Manasākata, Khāṇumata and pañcasāla are frequently mentioned.[36] Balakrishna Govinda Gokhale comments "The process of the formation of such Brāhmaṇagāmas can only be conjectured. They might have begun as settlements created by Brāhmaṇa enterprise or they might have been designated by the state as areas given over to Brāhmaṇa occupation. In these villages many Brāhmaṇas had substantial land holding, for one Brāhmaṇa is described as using 500 ploughs (pancamattani nagalassaiāni) which may not be taken quite literally though the use of up to 100 ploughs cannot be ruled out".[37]

Of the substantial land-holders those enjoying the **Brahmadeyya** lands were the most conspicuous. The **Brahmadeyya** grant is described as full of people (Sattussadam), complete with grass and trees (tiṇa and kaṭṭha) food grains (dhañña) and a royal gift (rājadāyam) a **Brahma** gift which may be translated as "a most excellent

gift, a royal gift, a gift given with full powers or a full gift".[38] According to Gokhale the **Brahmadeyya** system was as old as 550 B.C. as the **Pāli** literature suggests and such grants **meant** alienation of land, with all the economic rights attendant there upon to the Brāhmaṇas. He makes a very interesting suggestion that the land grants were not restricted to the Brāhmaṇas, on the evidence of **Pāyāsi Sutta** of the **Dīghanikāya**.[39] To quote Gokhale, "Pāyāsi enjoyed a **Rājadāya** and **Brahmadeyya** in Setavya from king Pasenḍi kōsala. Now pāyasi, called a **Rājañña** and no where does the **Sutta** indicate that he was an expert in Brāhmanical learning and ritual. On the other hand he was a well known **sceptic** and **agnostic** when he started his discussions with Kumāra Kassapa. **The land, therefore, could not have been granted to him for his religious and ritual competence**[39a]. Further more, he is shown as exercising administrative rights over his estate, rights such as the apprehension and punishment of criminals".[40]

Gokhale is cautious when he says that the use of the term **Brahmadeyya** in the grant of land to a **Rajañña** such as **Pāyāsi** is unusual.[41] He explains it as a careless use of a technical term in the case of a grant to a **Rajañña** when the term could appropriately be used only in relation to a grant

to a Brāhmaṇa.

The gifts by students to their Brāhmaṇa teachers, as referred to in the **Mahābhārata**, **Manu**, **Yājñavalkya Smṛtis** also played a crucial part in the origin and development of the **Agrahāra** institution.

From the above discussion it becomes clear that both the Hindu and Buddhist texts viewed the **Brahmadēya system** as primarily a religio-economic institution, well-recognised and endorsed by the state. It may reasonably be concluded that this system had its roots in the Vedic-age itself and slowly evolved through the Epic periods and consolidated itself in the historic period. It is interesting to note in this context that the **Arthaśāstra**, as already seen above, clearly says that superintendents, accountants, **sthānikas** veterinary surgeons (**anīkastha**), **gōpas** , etc., also received lands probably as salaries or remuneration. It may further be noted that the recipients were both Brāhmaṇas and non-Brāhmaṇas. The difference between **Brahmadēyas** and non-**Brahmadēyas** such as the above was that the land grants made to the royal servants including the Brāhmaṇa servants of the state, had no right to alienate the gift land by sale or mortgage. This indirectly proves that ancient Indian kings endowed lands to the **śudras** too.

During the period of Aśōka we do not get any direct references to **Brahmadēyas**. But he is said to have visited the **Śramaṇas** and **Brāhmaṇas** and made gifts to them.[42] Similarly, the teachers of the Brāhmaṇa community are also mentioned in minor Rock Edict II.[43] Though we are not sure whether there were endowments were made to Brāhmaṇas, we can rightly guess that they were living in separate localities as a distinguished community like the Śramaṇas. This is partially indicated by the visits of Aśōka and supported by **Brāhmaṇagāmas** mentioned in the Buddhist works.

The Śātavāhana period provides some clinching evidence regarding village grants. A Nasik inscription of Vāsisthīputra Śrī Puḷumāvi records an endowment of a village called Sāmalipāda to the Buddhist **Bhikṣus** of the **Bhādāyanīya** school, making it "not to be entered (by royal officers) not to be touched (by any one of them), not to be dug for salt, not to be interfered with by the district police, (in short) to enjoy all kinds of immunities.[44] Further, the donation of the village of Sāmalipada and the immunities were registered at Sudasana.



S.V.U. LIBRARY TIRUPATI

An inscription of the time of Gautamīputra Śri Śātakarṇi describes the donation in the following manner. "The Ajakalakiya field in the village of western Kākhadi, previously enjoyed by Uṣabadata-from that village a field of two hundred 200-nivartanas -we confer on those Tekirasi ascetics, and to that field we grant immunity (making it) not to be entered (by royal officers), not to be touched (by any of them) not to be dug for salt, not to be interfered with by the district police and (in short) to enjoy all kinds of immunities; with those immunities invest it; and this field and these immunities take care to have registered here. Verbally ordered; written down by the officer Sivaguta; kept by the Mahasamiyas". The deed was delivered in the 18th year, on the first day of the second fortnight of the rainy season; executed by Tāpasa.

All these detailed descriptions of the donations such as the registration, mentioning the officers involved in the execution of the deed, date and season themselves provide ample proof that by this time the donation of the villages and lands by the kings was very well systematised. The point to be taken note of here is that in the later Agraharas of the Pallavas, Bṛhatphalāyanas, Śalankāyanas, etc. similar the same type

of descriptions regarding the immunities, registration and other details are found. The only difference we find is the absence of the term Agrahāra in the Nasik Buddhist records. It is also interesting to note that Uṣabadata[46] is said to have given 16 villages to the gods and Brāhmaṇas and 70,000 karṣapaṇas.[47] This indicates that some of the Brāhmaṇas were receiving the villages during this age. In the inscription mentioned above[48] a field was given, bought at the hands of Brāhmaṇa. Aśvibhūti, which field belonged to his father, from which food will be produced for all the monks, indicating that some of the Brāhmaṇas owned villages and enjoyed the rights to sell.[49]

During the period of Bṛhatphalāyanas, Pallavas and Śalankāyanas there is almost a sudden appearance of copper-plate charters registering Brahmadēyas with all the immunities mentioned above. This may be taken to represent two points. Firstly, the custom was only taken up by the Hindu kings indicating the continuity of the Brahmadēya system. Secondly, for the first time the charters were issued to the donees as their personal possessions i.e. copper plates. It may be noted that earlier the Brāhmaṇas must have been issued the charters in perishable materials. With the introduction of engraving

inscriptions on stone by Asōka and propagated subsequently during the period of **Śātavāhana** and **Ikṣvākus**, during the post - Ikṣvāku period the medium of copper should have been introduced for the longevity of the charters.

Generally, the village grants to the Brāhmaṇas were designated as **Brahmadēya**, **Agrahāra** , Caturvēdi **mangalam** etc. However, Burton stein says "of these only **Agrahāram** seems to have conveyed a substantially different meaning within the general meaning of **Brahmadēya**, 'a donation to Brāhmaṇas'. **Agrahāram** appears to have been more often used in inscriptions to designate a set of privileges held by Brāhmaṇas living in villages over which they did not enjoy the same dominance as the Brāhmaṇas of **Brahmadēyas**.[50] There is some support for this view from the early copper plate charters. The early Prakrit copper-plate charters like the kondamudi plates of Bṛhatphālāyanas Jayavarman,[51] the Prakrit charters of the Pallavas like the Maidavōlu plates of Sivaskandavarman[52] and the Sanskrit charters of the Pallavas mention the endowment of villages to the Brāhmaṇas as Brahmadēyas, while the Prakrit charters of the Śālankāyanas from **Kānukollu**[53] and Dhārikāṭura grant of Acaṇḍavarman[54] mention them as **Agrahāras**. It is very interesting that from the two

**Śālankāyana charters from Kānukollu**, the earlier plates, i.e. of **Nandivarman** (I), (year 14) **designate it as an Agrahāra** while the later ones i.e. of **Skandavarman**, (year I) **mention** it as Brahmadēya. It may further be noted that the two sets are separated by only one generation.

This point needs some discussion. It has already been noted above the copper-plate charters ($4^{th}$-$5^{th}$ centuries A.D.) from Madhaya pradesh mentioned the grants to Brāhmaṇas as **Brahmadēya-Kul-āgrāhāra**, Brahmadēyāgrāhāra, **Cāturvidy-āgrāhāra** apart from **Brahmadēya** and **Agrahāra**. **Brahmadēya-Kul-āgrāhāra** may denote an **Agrahāra** to the caste Brāhmaṇas and **Cāturvidyāgrāhāra** an **agrahāra** to **Cāturvaidyas**. It is interesting that the term **Brahmadēyāgrāhāra** is also used. A useful observation shows that all these had suffix **Agrahāra**, even to **Brahmadēya**. D.C.Sircar, as already noted, suggests that a division was known as **āhāra** because it fetched revenue. Here **Agrahāra** may mean a class of village donated which fetched highest revenue. It may be conjectured that **Agrahāra** denoted a vague meaning of a territorial division fetching revenue while **Brahmadēya** belonged to a well defined class of gift. **Agrahāra** is suffixed in all these cases, not in the sense of a gift but as a class of a village. However it should be

borne in mind that nothing can be finally said regarding the extent meaning of **Brahmadēya** and **Agrahāra** as long as there is no direct evidence from literature or inscriptions. It remains a conjecture. Hence, if **Agrahāra** denotes a particular village with highest revenue, perhaps, a royal village, then it may be suggested that the village was converted into an **Agrahāra** to be called as Brahmadēyāgrahāra. When the term **Agrahāra** was used in the place of **Brahmadēya**, probably it did not enjoy all the immunities that were conferred upon a **Brahmadēya**. If **Brahmadēya** and **Agrahāra** denoted the same endowment then why should it be called a Brahmadēyāgrahāra:? However, in the succeeding centuries the exact connotation of these two probably became oblivious and were treated as synonyms. But in the early period there should have existed some difference. These are again speculations based on epigraphs which in turn are quite vague in supplying information. Nevertheless, we have some supporting evidence from the Hebbaṭa grant of Visnuvarman, an early kadamba ruler of Kṛṣṇavarman's line. According to this grant that the king made an **Agrahāra** of the village Herbbata and offered it with dakṣiṇa and libations of water, in accordance with the **Brahmadēya-nyāya** to a **Yajurvēda** Brāhmaṇa of the

Badira family and the **Gautama-gōtra**. It is obvious that the grant was referring to a village which was made into an **Agrahāra** which in turn had to follow certain rules and **Brahmadēya-nyāya**, which should have been different from that of the rules of **Agrahāra**, being applied to it. A clear cut proof for this proposition comes from the Peddadugām plates of Śatrudamana(year,9).[58] D.C.Sircar, the editor of the plates observes: "Mahārāja Śatrudaman's order in respect of the grant recorded in the document was issued to the villagers (**grāman** in the sense of **gramēyakān**), headed by Brahmanas and others, residing at the three localities called **Duhāgrāma**, **Vasuvāṭaka**, and **Gōvāṭaka** within what is called the **Agrahāra** (revenue-free area in the possession of Brāhmaṇas) of Giri-Kaliṅgavardhamāna (i.e. the Vardhamāna Agrahāra in the Giri Kaliṅga district). As the gift villages are stated to have been situated in an Agrahāra, the present grant may be regarded as a re-allotment of the localities, which were already revenue-free, in favour of the donees of the charter. The donees were two Brāhmaṇas named Bappaśarman and Sarvaśarman who were the sons of Yajñaśarman and residents of Paṭṭuvagrāma. They belonged to the **Kauṇḍinya gōtra** and were students of the **Taittirīya** school of the **Yajurvēda**. The gift villages were made a **Brāhmaṇa-dēya** and **Dvija-bhōga**. Here an ex-Agrahāra

comprising three villages was converted into a **Brāhmaṇa-dēya** and **Dvija-bhōga**. Obviously, these terms must have been used deliberately to make a distinction. The **Brahmadēya-nyāya** referred to earlier should have been the same as **Brāhmaṇa-dēya** and it obviously referred to rules regarding the **Brahmdēyas** which are encountered in the early inscriptions such as the Maidavolu plates of Siva Skandavarman.[57]

These references leave no doubt that there was some technical distinction between **Agrahāra** and **Brahmadēya** probably with regard to exemption of taxes and privileges, though they denoted more or less the same meaning, as already noted, in the later periods.

It may be supposed that the earlier form is **Brahmadēya** as it is represented in the Koṇḍamuḍi plates of Bṛhatphalāyana Jayavarman. The Buddhist chronicles and the Arthaśāstra mention only **Brahmadēya** and not **Agrahāra**. But it is difficult to say how and why the term **Agrahāra** was introduced though both **Brahmadēya** and **Agrahāra** were used as synonyms in the inscriptions including the early charters. There must have been some technical difference which is difficult to detect for lack of

sufficient evidence both in literature and inscriptions.

The royal dynasties of the post-Ikṣvaku period in Āndhra promoted the Agrahāras to a very high point. Needless to say that fundamentally religion was the motivating factor for these kings. We get a direct evidence of the religious purpose of the Agrahāra from the Kondamudi plates of Bṛhatphālayana Jayavarman which records that fortune, wealth, power and victory were said to be given by the donees to the king as a reward for the grant of the village Pantūra as Brahmadēya to eight Brāhmaṇa. The belief that the Agrahāra donation to the Brāhmaṇas helps in the well being of the king and his family seems to have been well set by this period. The Dhārikātūra grant of Acaṇḍa Varman[58] (year 35) says that the donation was made for the increase of the king's religious merit, longevity, army, animal corps, wealth and sovereignty and for the prosperity, success and increasing welfare of his family and clan.

We understand that there were a set of well established rules regarding the Agrahāra system. This is suggested by the Maidavōlu plates of Pallava Sivaskandavarman[59], wherein they state that the village Viripara is exempted "with all the other immunities prescribed by the rules regarding all Brahmadēyas". Some

inscriptions, however, did not mention Brahmadēya or Agrahāra though the immunities and the pattern of endowment was exactly the same such as that of a Brahmadēya. The reason probably for this was that the system became so popular that it did not warrant any mention.

The Penugoṇḍa plates of Hastivarman[60] register that the village Mulukuli was granted to sixty Brahmadēyas as dakṣiṇa of the Prathama kalyāṇa for the increase of the king's virtues, longevity and strength, and more significantly for his passage to heaven. The inscription also states that Mahārāja Hastivarman was one hundred years old when the charter was issued. D.C.Sircar feels that the charter was probably issued when the king was afraid of death in the near future.[61] This grant was not specified as either a Brahmadēya or an Agrahāra. Here we may note that the Salankayanas granted a village to Rathakaras as an Agrahāra.[62]

The same zeal was exhibited by the dynasties of Viṣṇukuṇḍins, Cāḷukyas, Eastern Gangas, Cōḷas, Kākatīyas, Reḍḍis and the Vijayanagara kings. The frequency of these endowments might have varied but only in degree, and certainly depended upon the political and

economic situations of the respective kingdoms.

We may notice some change with regard to Brahmadēyas from 5-6$^{th}$ centuries A.D onwards. The number of Brāhmana donees gradually increases. Similarly, the earlier grants of Pallavas etc., were not lengthy and somewhat shorter in recording the genealogy of the kings. But in the later grants the pattern of the copper plate grant is changed and we find lengthy genealogies and quotations from Epics, purāṇas etc. The imprecatory and benedictory portions also increased and the former were somtimes harsh and vulgar.

The frequency of the Agrahāra system was affected partly to some extent by the institution of the temple during the medieval period. The temples also in this period were endowed with villages with immunities as in the case of the Agrahāra and were technically known as **Dēvadāya** and **Dēvāgrahāra**. The term **Dēvāgrahāra** itself suggests that it was an Agrahara meant for gods. The origin of the temples is generally traced to the Ikṣvāku period. In this context it may be noted that a Nāsik cave inscription of Uṣabadāta[83] mentions him as the one who has given sixteen villages to gods and Brāhmaṇas, indicating indirectly to **Dēvadāyas** and **Brahmadēyas**.

The discovery of Hindu temples such as the Puṣpabhadra svāmi temple, Sarvadēva temple, Dēvasēna temple, Kārtikēya, Aṣṭabhujasvāmi temples attests to the fact that Hinduism was also popular during the Ikṣvaku period. The significant thing to note here that all these temples were built following **Āgamic** principles. The famous Guḍimallam Linga atleast goes back to first century B.C. Several temples were also discovered from Mahabubnagar and Kurnool districts such as Vīrapuram, Rangapur, Gumakoṇḍa, Kūḍavelli Sangamēsvaram from Mahabubnagar district and Siddēsvaram from Kurnool district.[64]

The distribution of these temples indirectly indicates that there should have been some system to look after the maintenance of the temple and its worship. In Nāgārjunakoṇḍa a permanent endowment of a village Pudokedam was made to the Pushpabhadrasvāmi temple for its maintenance.[65] Hence, we may assume that some kind of assistance by the state in the form of endowments existed even during the Ikṣvāku period though they were not termed as **Dēvadāna**.

D.C.Sircar opines that the God **Nārāyaṇa** mentioned in the Penugoṇḍa plates of **Śālankāyana Hastivarman** was worshipped in a temple at Jayapura, which the king visited on pilgrimage and that the Kalyāṇa ceremony on the occasion of which the grant was made was performed in the said temple. He further suggests that many of the donees were associated with the temple of Nārāyaṇa at Jayapura.[66] The endowment was probably made to the Brahmanas for their services in the temple.

For the first time **Dēvadāna** is technically mentioned as **Dēvabhōgahala** in the Oṃigōḍu grant of Pallava Vijayaskanda varman II, (33rd year).[67] Again Dēvabhōgahala is mentioned in the Pikira grant of Pallava Simhavarman.[68] A reference to Dēvabhōja is found in the Cendalur plates of Kumāraviṣṇu II.[69]

It may be concluded by the evidences cited above that apart from Brahmadēyas or Agraharas there existed, simultaneously, **Dēvabhōgas** or **Dēvahalas**, the lands or villages meant for the temples. The fact that **Dēvabhōgas** are mentioned in the records pertaining to Agrahāras shows that they were treated equally. Further, the charters excluded **Dēvabhōgas** while recording endowments of

Agrahāras which suggests that similar immunities were enjoyed by **Dēvadānas**. In this context it may be noted that the Pallava queen Cārudēvī endowed four **nivartanas** of land to the God Nārāyaṇa of the **Kuli-mahātāraka** temple at Dālūra. It is specifically stated that the land is endowed by her " making it a means for increasing our length of life and power". This makes it clear that the **Dēvadāyas** concomitant with the Agrahāras were believed to increase one's merit and life and were popular with the royal harem.

The Buddhist kings also endowed villages in favour of the Buddhist establishments probably by the guidance provided by the Hindu kings. The Viṣṇukuṇḍin king Gōvindavarman[70] is stated to have gifted two villages to the vihara for **dīpa-dhūpa-gandha-puṣpa-dhvaja-pāna-bhōjana-śayanāsana-glāna,bhaiṣojya-khaṇḍa-sphutita-jirna-samskara** etc. As the Mahāyānism was progressing at this stage, the elaborated rituals in Buddhist establishments probably necessitated these grants. Another inscription of the king Vikramēndravarman of the same dynasty[71] records the grant of a village to the vihāra called **paramabhaettarikā mahāvihāra**.[72]

There is a general feeling that from the period of Eastern Cāḷukyas as more number of temples were constructed by the kings, feudatories and the rich, the frequency of gifting Agrahāras is some what decreased. On closer examination statistically speaking this may not be completely true. It may be noted that throughout the period from Eastern Cāḷukyas to Vijayanagara, the system of Agrahāra continued without any break, though with altered frequencies. We have to remember that even for the Dēvadāyas the same rules and regulations, imprecations and benedictions were followed as in the case of Brahmadēyas, and both the systems were primarily concerned with the villages which were ultimately connected with the religion. Therefore the concept of donating a village in favour of a Brāhmana or a temple was not different. The Brāhmanas as priests and Mahājanas were associated with the worship, ritual and administration of the temple and had shares in the Dēvadānas.

**Types of Agraharas:**

No systematic classification of Agrahāras was made by any religious authority or religious text. It is for the matter of convenience and understanding that

we may divide them into different types.

1. **Brahmadēya**
2. **Dēvadāya**
3. **Vaiśyāgrahāra**
4. **Agrahāra** (village grant) to **Kṣatriyas**
5. **Agrahāra** (village grant) to **Śūdras**

1.**Brahmadeya**: Brahmadēyas as already noted are the villages donated in favour of the Brāhmaṇas and are also known as Agrahāras or Caturvēdimangalams.

2.**Dēvadāya**: **Dēvadāya** is the endowment of a village in favour of a temple with the immunities that are applicable to Brahmadēya. It is also known as Dēvāgrahāra, Dēvabhōga etc.

3.**Vaiśyāgrahāra**: The village donations to the **vaiśyas** is taken to mean a **Vaiśyāgrahāra** though we have only two instances of the villages being called as **Vaiśyāgrahāras**. A feudatory of the Eastern Gānga king Madhukāmaraṇadēva[74] is said to have donated three villages having made them into a **Vaiśyāgrahāra** to one Mancināyaka who belonged to the family of Vaiśya. Similarly the king's successor Vajrahasta[75] donated a **Vaisyāgrahāra** to a certain Mallapa Srēṣhṭi.

4.**Agrahāras (village grants) to Kṣtriyas**: The kings donated villages to some persons either related to them or who have

helped them in the battles. Some of these donees were directly connected with the ruling monarchs while for some others the kings had personal sentiments of their own to endow villages in their favour. Probably this custom of endowing villages to the persons who have exhibited bravery or helped the kings in the battles led to the establishment of the Nāyaṅkara system during and after the Kākatīyas.

The Masulipaṭnam plates of Amma I[76] register the grant of the village Drujjūru by the Eastern Cāḷukya Ammarāja (I) Viṣṇuvardhana to Mahākāla, a military general and son of a foster sister of Ammararāja's grand father Cāḷukya Bhīma. It is interesting to note here that Cāḷukya Bhīma's foster mother is described as a second earth to him and like a warrior endowed with endurance. She had a daughter named Gāmakāṁba, like unto Ambika, who drank her mother's milk sharing with king Bhīma. She broughtforth a son endowed with strength like Kumāra, the high-spirited Mahākāla, (who became) a general of king Bhīma. In the battle field where fire is produced by the clashing together of the opponents arms, going before his master, this brave one more than once has annihilated the enemy's army.[77] It is evident that the grant was made

owing to the personal attachment and sentiment of the Eastern Cāḷukya family towards the donor and the donor's own valour and bravery.

The Eastern Gānga king Vajrahasta[78] is said to have donated a village Hossondi to one Kāmadi the **rājaputra** who illumined the quarters of the compass with the banner of the renown which he has gained by his victories in many battles.

5. **Agrahāras (village grants) to Śūdras:** The earliest reference of the Agrahāra to a Śūdra occurs from two Śālankāyana charters from Kānukollu.[79] Mahārāja Nandivarman donated a village to the **Rathakāra Cāturvēdya** who is endowed with the capacity of cursing and of conferring boons etc. Again Mahārāja Skandavarman is said to have given a village to the **Rathakāra** having made it **Brahmadēya** and exempting it from all taxes. Though there is some controversy as to the Rathakāras being Śūdras or Brahmanas, it may be presumed that they were certainly Śūdras based on the internal evidence of the charters.[80]

The Arasavelli copper plate grant of Ganga Vajrahasta[81] states that the king Vajrahasta III granted a village Arasavelli to a number of men and women of the

**Kāyastha** caste. The same inscription refers to a few shares being bestowed on Śūdras who had honorific suffix raṭṭaḍi added after their names. According to Sri Manda Narasimham, the editor of the plates, a sort of subtle difference appears to have been made between **Kāyasthas** and **raṭṭaḍis** as **Kāyasthas** are described **Kāsyapagōtrōtpanna** and raṭṭadis as **Śūdra Vamsōdbhava**.[82]

The Agrahāras of the non-Brāhmaṇas were also exempted from certain taxes as in the case of like the Brahmadēyas though they might not have enjoyed all the privileges that were conferred upon the Brahmadēyas. If the donees were Brāhmaṇas their gōtras, almost as a rule, were mentioned whereas for Śūdra donees either there was no mention of gōtras or if at all recorded, were quite conspicuous.

**NOTES AND REFERENCES:**


1. S.Leela Shanta Kumari, **History of the Agraharas in Karnataka**: 400-1300, Madras, 1986, pp.8-9.
2. D.L.Narasimhachar, **Śabdavihāra**, pp.55, cited in Leela Shanta Kumari, Op.cit.
3. 'Nandapur copper plates', EI XXIV, P.127.
4. S.Leela Shantakumari, Op.cit.
5. Select Inscriptions, p.404.
6. F.Kittel **Kannada-English Dictionary**,Mangalore 1894.
7. A.S.Altekar, **State and Government in Ancient India**, Delhi,1958, p.294.
8. C.Meenakshi, **Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas**, Madras, 1938, p.200.
9. Noboru Karashima, (Ed.) **Recent Discoveries and Research Methods in the Field of South Asian Epigraphy, Indus valley to Mekong Delta; Explorations in Epigraphy**, Madras, 1985, pp.7-8.
10. Ibid. p.9.
11. Romila Thapar, ' Dana and Daksina as forms of Exchange' in **Ancient Indian Social History some interpretations**, Delhi, 1987.
12. S.Leela Shanta Kumari, Op.cit.

13. Jogiraj Basu, **India of the Age of the Brāhmaṇas**, **Calcutta**, 1969.

14. R.N.Sharma, **Brāhmins through the Ages**, Delhi, 1977.

15. Romila Thapar, **Op.cit.**

16. **Ibid.** pp.105-106.

17. Rg Veda, VI.63.9; V.27;V.30. 12-14; VI.47; VIII.1.33; VIII.5.37; VIII.6.47, line.26.3.

18. **Ṛg Veda**, V.30-15; VI.47, quoted by Romila Thapar, **Op.cit.**

19. Romila Thapar, **Op.cit.**, p.110.

20. **Ibid**, p.112.

21. **Śathapatha Brāhmaṇa** II.2.10.6; quoted by Jogiraj Basu, **Op.cit.** pp.24.

22. **Aitarēya Brāhmana** VIII 20; **Cāndōgya Upaniṣhad** IV.2.4,5.

23. **Brāhmaṇah adāyyāpāyyā vasayī** quoted in Jogiraj Basu, **Op.cit.**, pp.107.

24. **Aitareya Brāhmaṇa** VII.18.

25. J.C.Heesterman, **The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration**, p.166; quoted in Romila Thapar, **Op.cit.**

26. P.V.Kane, **History of Dharmaśāstra**, Poona, 1941, vol.II. part2, pp.8-44.

27. Rmila Thapar, **Op.cit.**,p.115.

28. **Ibid.**,pp.114-115.

29. **Ibid**

30. **R.Shama sastry**, E.d., **Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra**, A.s2.46 Mysore, 1967, pp.45-46, under 'Formation of Villages'.

31. **Ibid.**

32. **Arthaśāstra** 2.2.2., quoted in Jogiraj Basu, **op.cit.**, p.166.

33. **Ibid.**

34. R.N.**Sharma** **Brāhmiṇs Through the Ages**, Delhi, 1977, p.169.

35. B.G.Gokhale,'**The Brahmanas** in **Early Buddhist Literature**', **JIH XLVIII**, p.55.

36. **DN** I, p.109,199, **SamN** I.P.113; quoted in Gokhale, **Ibid.**

37. **Ibid.**

38. **DN** I, pp.76,99; quoted by Gokhale, **Ibid.**, p.56, note.19.

39. **Ibid.**, p.57.

39a. Emphasis **mine**.

40. **Ibid**, **DN**, I , p.191, quoted by Gokhale.

41. **Ibid.**

42. **Rock Edict** VIII, **EI**, III, pp.135-142.

43. **Ibid.**

44 EI, VIII, 'The Inscriptions in the caves at Nasik', no.3, plate.ii, khs.19. Emphasis mine.

45. Ibid., no.4, plate ii, khs.13.

46. Ibid., no.10, plate IV, ksh.5.

47. Ibid., no.12, plate.V, ksh.9.

48. Ibid., no.10, plate.IV, ksh.5.

49. K.Syamalamma, ' The Origin and Evolution of Agrahāra in Āndhra', PAPHC, XVII, pp.94-99.

50 Burton Stein, **Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India**, Delhi, 1980, p.145, under ' The Coromandal Brahmadeya Village'.

51. EI, VI, p.315.

52. Ibid, p.84.

53. EI, XXXI, p.1.

54. EI, XXXVI, P.1.

55. MAR (1925), P.98, quoted by S.Gururajachar, **Some Aspects of Economic and Social life in Karnataka**, Mysore, 1974; Gururajachar does not seem to have noticed the distinction between **Agrahāra** and **Brahmadēya**.

56. EI, XXXI, pp.89-92.

57. Line 16 "...by the rules regarding all Brahmadēyas we have caused it to be exempted", EI, VI, pp.84-88.

58. EI, XXXVI, p.1.

59. EI, VI, p.84.

60. EI, XXXV, p.149.

61. Ibid., p.147.

62. EI, XXXI, pp.1-10.

63. EI, VIII, pp.59, no.10, plate IV, ksh.5.

64. I.K.Sarma, **The Development of Early Saiva Art and Architecture**, Delhi, 1982, p.89.

65. EI, XXXIV, p.17.

66. EI, XXXV, p.147.

67. EI, XV, p.251.

68. EI, VIII, p.163.

69. Ibid, p.233-235.

70. Ibid, p.143, lines 5-7.

71. EA, II, pp.4.

72. Ibid.

73. Also see Dr.S.S.Ramachandra Murthy, 'Epigraphical References to Buddha in Andhra Pradesh', **S.V.University Oriental Journal** Tirupathi, vol.XXVI, parts.1-2, pp.60-63.

74. JAHRS, VIII, pp.168-170.

75. Bharati, II, part.II, pp.138-155.

76. EI, V, pp.131-132.

77. Ibid., vs.5-8.

78. EI, III, pp.220-222.

79. EI, XXXI, pp.1-10.

80. P.Krishna Mohan Reddy, 'A note on the term Rathakāra occuring in two Śālankāyana Charters from Kānukollu', paper presented at the annual conference of the Epigraphical Society of India, Mysore, February, 1990.

81. **JAHRS**, XXI, pp.113-120.

82 **Ibid**., p.116.

# CHAPTER - III

# AGRAHARA AND SOCIETY

# AGRAHARA AND SOCIETY

An attempt is made in the following pages to assess the extent to which the Agrahāra system influenced the society. This, of course, cannot be said with utmost certainty since the primary source for the study of Agrahāras i.e inscriptions have a different purpose in recording the endowments. The inscriptions, however are indirect reflections of the social, economic and religious institutions that existed during that period. They also, offer significant information, though incidentally in passing, from which one has to examine the aspects mentioned above.

One can be sure that the Agrahāra system cannot be very different from the rest of the society as the Agrahāra system itself formed a limb of the society. It would be an overstatement to say that the Agrahāras influenced the social institutions and the social structure significantly, because the Brāhmaṇas were living in non-Brahmadēya villages also simultaneously and earlier too as a social class. Secondly, when the Brahmadēyas themselves had of eighteen traditional castes due to which a close interaction among all these different groups

including Brāhmaṇas was on. Sometimes, only a select class of these eighteen castes might have lived in the Brahmadēya village. Still, these rural centers of Brāhmaṇa donees very much needed the support and participation of other sections of the society. Here it is generally examined in general how the inscriptions recording donations of Agrahāras referred to different sections of the society and an attempt is being made to assess their relationships.

**BRĀHMAṆAS:**

It is generally held that Buddhism was responsible for seriously disturbing the Brāhmaṇa institutions and Brāhmaṇas. This may be true only to some extent. Some studies by scholars like B.G.Gokhale[1], Y.Krishnan[2], show that Buddhism did not change radically, the position of Brāhmaṇas in the society. The works of R.N.Sharma[3], Jogiraj Basu[4] also suggest that more or less a similar position was enjoyed by the Brāhmaṇas even during the period of Buddhist dominance. B.G.Gokhale[5], has taken 332 individuals from the Thera and **Theri Gātha** for his analysis. He shows that of these 332 persons 134 or 40.8% (117 monks and 17 nuns) belonged to the Brāhmaṇa caste, 98 or over 29% (74 monks and 24 nuns)

belonged to the Gahapati or vessa group. 75 or over 22.0%(53 monks and 22nuns) were members of the khaṭṭiya order. Eleven (7 monks and 4 nuns) came from the Śūdra class and ten (7 monks and 3 nuns) may be described as belonging to the degraded classes of contemporary society. Y.Krishnan[6] observes, " Inspite of its repudiation of a hereditary caste system, the Brāhmins occupy a high position in Buddhism". In the Nikāyas, the Brāhmins are consider superior to and district from ordinary men. In the Jātakas, the Brahmins are almost invariably referred to respectfully. As a Bōdhisatva, the Buddha in his previous births is frequently stated to have taken birth as a Brahmin. One of the four things in which the Buddhas, according to Milindapanha, differ is that some are born as Brāhmins and others as Kṣatriyas.

The Buddhist literature specifically mentions the conversions of Brāhmins, and it was from their ranks that the greatest exponents of philosophy of the Buddha were recruited. Apart from the Buddha's two chief disciples Sāriputa and Moggallāna, Mahākassapa, Nāgārjuna, Aśvaghōṣa, Asaṅga also were Brāhmaṇas.[7] Even Aśōka, as already noted paid his respects and gifts to Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas. Hence, it may be argued that Brahmanas maintained a social

status in the Buddhist period that was similar to the one during succeeding periods.[8]

Some epigraphs of the Śātavāhana period refer to Brāhmaṇas. Gautamīputra Śrī Śātakarni is described as the "Unique" Brāhmaṇa.[9] The declaration of the king himself as Brāhmaṇa attests to the reverence enjoyed by the Brāhmaṇas in the Śātavāhana society. Similarly the inscriptions recording the endowments of lands and villages during this period, as already noted (in the first chapter, 'Formation and Evolution of Agrahāra') confirm this.

This position of the Brāhmaṇas must have improved considerably during the Ikṣvāku period as there was a renaissance of Hindu religion as evidenced by the performance of a variety of Vedic sacrifices and the construction of many temples.

The post Ikṣvāku period is marked by the appearance of copper-plate charters which bear testimony ,to the new lease of life given to the Brāhmaṇism and the Brāhmaṇas in the form of Agrahāra grants, which were officially recorded through these copper plate charters. One may notice a continuity of this custom up to the cāḷukya period. Even later, the Brāhmaṇa class participated

actively in the temple institution which was gaining upper hand over Brāhmadēya system, of course, due mainly to the changed scenes of political and economic situations.

The Post-Ikṣvāku dynasties of Āndhradēśa like the Bṛhatphalāyanas, Pallavas, Śālankāyanas took interest in the conduct of sacrifices like Agniṣṭōma, Aśvamēdha, etc., which enabled the Brāhmaṇa class to keep up their dominance in the society. However, we have to remember that these inscriptions are to be taken to represent the Brāhmaṇas of the Brahmadēyas. These are not to be confused with the Brāhmaṇas those were living in non-Brahmadēya villages and those living in the isolated Brāhmaṇa villages which were not Brahmadēyas. It is impossible to distinguish among the Brāhmaṇas of these categories which most probably, did not exist at all. Hence the references to Brāhmaṇas as donees and their descriptions may generally be applicable to all these categories.

A study of Agrahāras shows that the Brāhmaṇas commanded good respect in the society. In the Kanteru plates of Śālankāyana Vijayadevavarman, the villagers were ordered to behave well with the donees with affection as done

hitherto (**Pūrva-maryyādaya**).[10] Similarly, those who cause obstruction and inconvenience to donees are warned that they would be fried by royal wrath[11]. In the beginning though the donee Brāhmaṇas were mentioned in simple terms gradually, they were described with respect, stating their academic qualifications, good qualities, etc. The omgōdu grants of Pallava Vijayaskandavarman II and Simhavarman II[12] describe the two donee Brāhmaṇas: the first one as the learned Golaśarman of the **Kāśyapa gotra**, a student of two **Vēdas** and well versed in the all Angas, and the other belonging to the **Kāśyapa gotra** and **Cānoogya sūtra** and well-versed in all the Śāstras.[13]

The importance given to the learned Brāhmaṇas while making an endowment seems to have increased during the Cālukya period. A Brāhmaṇa donee **Pallabhattāraka**, in a grant issued by the Eastern Cālukya king, Vijayāditya II[14] is described as the one who belongs to the **kāśyapa gotra** and **Āpastamba sūtra**, a student of the **Tattirīya Veda**, a son of the student of the three Vēdas Doṇa Śaraman and son's son of the student of three vedas Tūrkaśaraman, indicating that the academic background and social respect of the donees and their forefathers was taken into consideration for making an endowment of Agrahāra.

Such instances can be multiplied to show that the Brāhmaṇas were learned and so enjoyed a high social status. They continued to command dominance in the social sphere during the period of succeeding dynasties viz., Cāḷukyas, Cōlas, Kākatīyas, Reḍḍis and Vijayanagaras.

**KṢATRIYAS:**

The material for the study of the social and economic position of Kṣatriyas in Āndhra is indeed scanty. It is well-known that there is probably an absence of Kṣatriyas in Āndhra unlike in northern-India. After the Sanskritisation or Brāhmaṇisation of the south, the ruling class of Āndhra who belonged to different ethnic groups imitated the customs and habits of the Kṣatriyas of Āryāvarta. According to Pāṇini and his commentators, the title of **rājanya** was held only by the descendants of certain Kṣatriya clans.[15] This cannot be strictly applied to south, though, of course the dynasties like the Bṛhatphalāyanas, Ānandagōtrins, Śālankāyanas and the Pallavas though being Brāhmaṇas and BrahmaKṣatrias seem to have followed the same customs of the ruling class. This is suggested by the fact that most of them were responsible for performing many sacrifices and giving away gifts which

were prescribed for Kṣatriyas in the religious texts. Some other dynasties like the Kākatīyas and Reḍḍis however belonged to the fourth class, a fact recorded by themselves in their inscriptions. Burton Stein observes, "also important was the fact that most locality warriers of south India, in Pallava times and somewhat later, were obviously of peasant origin and derived a part of their local authority from their continued identification, as such many other warriers of lower social origin (eg., hill people on the fringes of peasant society) appeared to have been content to rise to the status of respectable peasants. In addition, there was no conquering elite which might seek to preserve its identity through putative Kṣatriya rank".[16]

Thus it is evident that the ruling class of the post-Ikṣvaku were following certain set of rules and customs prescribed to a kṣatriya. However, no details are available in the inscriptions or literature about the Kṣatriyas who did not belong to the ruling families. In all probability they were serving the kings in the army.

The Agrahāra system, as seen from the inscriptions, owes a great deal to the ruling class, be it Kṣatriyas or any other community.

Some of the inscriptions of the dynasties like those of the Eastern Cāḷukyas record the endowment of villages to their own relatives. So the Kṣatriyas apart from donors appear in epigraphs as donees, also though rarely. The Eastern-Cāḷukya king Amma I[17] granted the village Drujjūru to one Mahākaḷa, a general who was his relative. One Kāmadi who was a rājaputra received a village exempted from all taxes, from the Eastern Ganga king Vajrahastadēva.[17a] Further, the donee is described as the ornament of the **Naggari-saluki** family. The expression **saluki** appears to be a variation of the word Cāḷukya.[18]

VAIŚYAS:

During the Buddhist period the trading class of which many were probably Vaiśyas (in Telugu, Kōmaṭlu), participated very actively in the Buddhist establishments. In Amarāvati, the gifts by the **Gahapatis**, **Seṭṭis**, **Sārthavahas**, etc..accounted for 31.03%[19] It is curious that the Vaiśyas who dominated as donors in the Buddhist period are not represented in the epigraphs till about the eighth century. It is held that the collapse of foreign trade affected these communities adversely. After the fall of the Ikṣvākus the Vaiśyas appear again in the inscriptions from medieval period, mostly as donors to temples. They

are also referred to as members of various merchant-guilds which made lavish endowments particularly to temples. It is interesting to note that there are a few instances where the Vaisyas received villages as gifts from the kings. The Cikkala valasa plates of Vajrahasta III[20] record the grant of the village Kuddam was given away to Mallayaśreṣṭi for his perpetual enjoyment. The village was gifted without let or hindrance. It is very interesting that the donation is said to have been made for the merit of the king himself and his parents (lines 38-41). This is somewhat strange since generally the donation to a Brāhmaṇa was considered to be meritorious by the Hindu kings. In this context it is to be noted that after obtaining the village from the king, the donee kept only a part of the village for himself and made over the rest to three hundred Brāhmaṇas. It is obvious that it was done so with the knowledge and permission of the king.

The Boḍḍapāḍu plates of Vajrahasta III[21] state that one Erayama of the Vaiśya family received a village from the king as **mādaramanavarttika** for the creation of a **bhōga** for the god Jalēśvara. However the meaning of the expression madaramanvarttika is not clear. Obviously, the village was entrusted to Erayama with the stipulation that

he would maintain the Bhoga to the god Jalesvara out of the income from that village. So he would not have any right either to sell or donate that village for any other purpose. This instance may be compared with the above mentioned grant of the village kuddam which was given away to a Vaiśya without any prior conditions. It may be noted that the instances of making endowment of villages to the Vaiśyas for whatever purpose do not occur often.

A direct evidence to a **Vaiśyāgrahāra** comes from some copper plates of the time of Madhukāmārṇadeva also of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.[22] One Lakṣmaṇa Rāmadēva, a feudatory of Madhukāmaraṇadēva, granted three villages having made them into a vaiśyāgrahāra to one Mancināyaka who belonged to the family of Vaiśyas. It is further interesting that the grant was made in perpetuity along with all water and land rights within its four limits, free from all molestations of Rāṇakas, Rājaputras and Viṣayapatis, etc.. A Vaiśya figures as a donor in an inscription from the temple of Visvēsvara in Pedda Ganjām, (Guntur district ).[23] Though there are several instances of the vaiśya making land grants, instances of their being either donors or donees of the villages are not common. However, it is noteworthy that the concept of vaiśyāgrahāra was in

existence during the medieval period though to a very limited extent.

**ŚŪDRAS:**

The Agrahāra system is directly connected with the śūdras who certainly formed the large change of population of the villages as agriculturists and labourers. In the beginning the Brahmadēya records did not mention śūdras, but later they were referred to as **arthaśiris**, and **Kuṭumbis** (cultivators) indicating that they gained an upper hand socially to find mention.

The villages of the śūdras, what may be termed as peasant villages, existed even prior to the Brahmadēya system. That the Brahmadēya system which engulfed these peasant villages did not arouse any conflict and hostility between Brāhmaṇas and the peasants in the early period confirms that the relations between the peasants and the donee Brāhmaṇas, who were the new comers, were cordial. Burton Stein feels that the peasant and the peasantry are not essentially economic, but sociological categories.[24] He also says that "Moreover there can be no question that the relationship between Brāhmaṇas and dominant cultivators was entirely voluntary and recognised as

mutually beneficial.[25] Like the traditional village the Brahmadēya village too was supposed to have, apart from the peasants, the eighteen traditional castes which included the washerman, the barber, the sweeper, potters, smiths, carpenters, weavers etc.. The earlier charters of the Pallavas such as the Hirehaḍagaḷḷi plates of Pallava Sivaskandavarman[26] mention herdsmen, cow herds etc also. In this context it is interesting that the four labourers receiving half the produce (addhika) are mentioned. It is also interesting to note that only ryots, ignoring all others, are addressed in the Rāmatīrtham plates of Viṣṇukuṇḍi Indravarman.[27] This may point to the slow but steady progress of the śūdra peasants in the social structure.

In the Śṛngavarapukōṭa plates of Kaliṅga Anantavarman[28] the king commands all the ryots present at the village of the kiṇḍeppa donating the same to one Mātṛiśarman as an Agrahāra. It is curious to note that only the cultivators are mentioned leaving the royal officers, suggesting that by this time the cultivators were considered as an important section to be addressed on account of their association with land and agriculture. In the succeeding dynasties the śūdras rose to the levels of

subordinate chiefs like the Koṇḍapaḍumaṭis, Rēcerla, Viriyāla, Gōna, Malyāla.[29] Besides, they were engaged in professions such as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, wood workers, potters, garland makers, with out whose participation in the society is indispensable. That most of these communities were enjoying a somewhat respectable position is proved by the inscriptions.[30] The Eastern Ganga king Vajrahasta[31] donated a village in favour of men and women belonging to the kāyastha caste. A few shares were also granted to the member of the sūdra caste. The Cēbrōlu inscription of Jāya[32] is very interesting in that it records that Jaya, who was the chief of the elephant troop of king Kākatiya Gaṇapati, received the city Ṣaṇmukha or Tāmrapuri, the modern Cēbrōlu, as a gift. In another inscription some balanjas are stated to have made a gift of the village Ganakepāḍu to the temple of Bhāvanārāyanadēva in Guntūr district.[33]

**Agrahāra and education :**

The āśrama system also probably prompted the formation of Agrahāras. The dakṣiṇas that were being paid by the students slowly turned into land grants and village grants as proved by literary evidences. However, we

have no direct epigraphic evidences in support of this suggestion. The sūtras the pre-mauryan age, do not prescribe any fee for the teacher. His income consisted of the presents obtained by him partly on the occasions of festivals, religious ceremonies and sacrifices and partly by voluntary gifts by the students. According to Gautama, on completion of the education the teacher is to be offered a fee ; only on its payment the student is allowed to go. It is to be noted that, at this stage of the history, the dakṣiṇa earlier payable by the student voluntarily, seems to have become obligatory. Further, in case of distress the teacher could accept presents from all the four castes.[34] During the post-Mauryan period, education was imparted in the hermitage of sages.[35] Probably the word **Brāhmaṇa kulam** used by Patanjali refers to such educational institutions.[36]

In the absence of any fees payable by the students, the Āsrama or the hermitage of the teacher, presumably depended on the royal support for its maintenance. However, the **dakṣiṇa** (fees) offered to the teacher at the end of the study might have also helped the teacher economically. Manu (II 245-246) says that the student need not give anything to the teacher till his **snāna**:

when he is about to return home, he may offer to his guru some wealth; That the gift of a field, gold, a cow, or a horse or even shoes or an umbrella, of a seat, corn, vegetables and clothes[37] may engender pleasure in the teacher. This also indicates the early origin of the land grants, of course, in the form of **dakṣiṇa** to guru. The **Mahābhārata** says[37a] that the teacher's satisfaction with the student's work and conduct is indeed a proper **dakṣiṇa**.[38] The Yaj (I. 51) says that one should give to his teacher what he chooses to ask as **dakṣiṇa**.[38a] Kātyāyana, quoted by Aparārka(P.76) prescribes that a Brāhmaṇa pupil may give a cow, a princely one a village, a Vaiśya a horse (if able to do so).[39] It is clear from the above references that the payment of **dakṣiṇa** by the student gradually became customary and it was fixed according to one's caste and means. As shown above (Kātyāna) the **dakṣiṇa** of a village by a princely pupil seems to have accelerated the formation of the Agrahāra system. The intention of the donation of a village might have been to provide a permanent income to the teacher in order to enable him to maintain his hermitage and impart education to the student.

We have a few epigraphical evidences in support of this **guru-dakṣiṇa** concept. The Āmudālapādu plates

of Bādāmi Cālukya Vikramāditya I[40] inform us that the king granted a village in favour of Sudarsanācārya as **guru-dakṣiṇa** on the occasion of the king's **Śiva-maṇḍala dīkṣa**. According to D.C.Sircar[41], the Cāḷukya king underwent Śaiva-dīkṣa i.e. initiation into śaiva faith at the hands of his guru or preceptor Sudarsanācārya who received the village as his **dakṣiṇa** or perquisite for the performance of the initiation ceremony.[[redacted]] He also says that in Indian epigraphy there are other instances of the grant of land as payment of **guru-dakṣiṇa** on the occasion of a king's initiation.[42] The same king endowed a village to one Śri **Mēghācārya** of the **vasiṣṭha gōtra**, who knows the **Vēdas** with their **Aṅgas** and **Upāngas**. It is significant to note that Vikramāditya calls him 'our own preceptor' (Guru).[43] This guru should have been a different one who did not receive any **dakṣiṇa** from the king and probably, as the donor himself suggests, he might have been either the royal guru or a teacher of the king at some stage.

A direct evidence of **guru-dakṣiṇa** comes from the Uttarēśvara grant of Kākatīya king Pratāparudra[44] which states that the learned king obtained the village of Uttarēsvara from Induśēkhara in order to grant it to his

teacher as **guru-dakṣiṇa**.

The above references confirms that the practice of giving **dakṣiṇa** to **guru** was continued from the early period. However, it should be noted that the **dakṣiṇas** of villages given to the teachers by the kings were not specifically described as **dakṣiṇas** for imparting education. But the fact that most of the **dakṣiṇas** were paid by the kings during the early years of their coronation may indicate that as soon as they became kings, they paid **dakṣiṇas** to their gurus. In this context we may recollect that while making grants of Agrahāras and Brahmadēyas the king also gave some cash as **dakṣiṇas**. This may also suggest the continuity of the customs of **dakṣiṇa**. We have seen above that there are instances of kings donating villages as **dakṣiṇa** to their gurus. In this context it should also be noted that all the royal dynasties of Āndhra endowed Agrahāras and Brahmadēyas, as a rule, only to Brāhmaṇas who were well educated. Most of the inscriptions right from the early Pallavas to the Vijayanagara describe the donee Brāhmaṇas as wellversed in **Vēda**, **Itihāsa**, **Purāṇa**, philosophy and various other branches of knowledge. The traditional **Ṣatkarmas** to be observed strictly by the Brāhmaṇas include **yajana**, **yājana**, **adhyayana**, **adhyāpana**, **dāna** and

**pratigraha**. In the **Penugoṇḍa** plates of **Śalankāyana** Hastivarman[45], all the sixty Brāhmaṇa donees are said to be engaged in penance (**tapas**) recitation of sacred texts (**Svādhyāya**), offering of oblations to gods (**hōma**), observance of vows (**vrata**) and religious austerities (**niyama**) as well as in the six duties enjoined on a Brāhmaṇa (**Ṣat-karma**) and were also experts in the **vēda vēdānga itihāsa** (tradition), **Purāṇa**, **nirōga** (medical science), **candōvicita** (metrics) and **pravacana** (exposition). An epigraph belonging to Viṣṇukuṇḍi Mādhavavarman[46] is interesting. One of the donees Bōlaśvāmin is described as a very pious Brāhmaṇa engaged in the six duties laid down for the members of his caste and intent on the performance of religious rites of the sanātanadharma enjoined in the śrutis and **smṛtis**. The Taṇḍivāḍa grant of Prithvi-mahārāja[47] describes the donee Bhāvaśarman as one who has studied three thousand sciences and written twenty commentaries, who is spending days and nights in worshiping gods, the pitṛis and the mankind, whose body has been purified by the water of sacred ablution in various sacrifices, whose intellect has been clarified by the knowledge of the **vēdas**, **vēdāngas**, **nyāya**, **upaniṣads** and **yōga** . Bhāvasarman's father, Pṛthvīśarman was also described in equally glorified terms. It was his

habit to study, teach and **comment** on three thousand sciences; his prosperity was revealed among the priests (ṛtvij) and assistants (**sadasya**) by the riches given away in the sacrifices frequently performed by him. Bhāvaśarman's grand father Viṣṇuśarman's mind had been purified by the due performance of **agniṣṭoma** and other sacrifices; he had mastered the śṛti and **smṛti**. While Bhāvaśarman studied **triśahasra-vidya**, Pṛthviśarman is described not only as the one who has studied all three thousand sciences (**triśahasra-vidya**), but also as teaching the same. We should not dismiss these descriptions so easily as an exaggeration. The word **sahaśra** as part of **triśahaśra-vidya** and **gṛhīta-sahaśra** also occurs in the viṣṇukuṇḍin records. S.Sankaranarayanan, dealt with the significance of these terms at length. According to him, **sahaśra** in **gṛhīta-sahaśra** may be something like the **bṛhatīsahasra**, etc., forming a considerable body of the **mahāvrata** and the **mahādhuktha** hymns to be chanted while constructing the fire altar of the bird-like shape with 1000 bricks of different shapes, for the agnicayana sacrifice as stated in the **Brāhmaṇas**.[48] He also opines that **sahaśra-tārka** denotes a scholar of 1000 **tarkas** or of the **mīmāmsa**, **nyāya**, **vaiśēṣika** and **yōgadarśana**.[49] An

inscription of Cāḷukya Jayasiṁha I also mentions **triśahaśra-vidyā**.[50] It records that the donee Brāhmaṇas who studied **vēda**, **vēdāṅga**, **itihāsa**, **purāṇa**, **mīmāṁsa** and other **Śāstras**, were also proficient in the **triśahaśra-vidya** and performed the **agniṣṭōma** sacrifices.

There are instances of allotting shares in Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas and are others well versed in different branches of knowledge. The Piṭhāpuram plates of Vīra-cōḍa, dated in the 23rd regnal year of Kulōttuṅgat I[51] is noteworthy in this connection. According to this inscription the Agrahāra, donated by the prince Vīra-cōḍa, one share each was assigned for the maintenance of the grammarian, expounder of **vēdānta**, teacher of the **Ṛg-vēda**, teacher of the **yajur-vēda**, teacher of **sāmans**, expounder of **rūpāvatāra**, teacher reciting **Purāṇas**, the physician, the barber, the poison doctor and the astrologer. It is interesting that two shares were allotted to the expounder of **mīmāṁsa**. It is further significant that barber also gets a share in the **Agrahāra** along with other learned Brahmadēyas. The Pentapāḍu grant of Cōda Bhaktirāja[52] mentions the donee Brāhmaṇas numbering 76 whose suffixes **Yajvan** **Ghaṭaśāsin**, **Bhaṭṭa** ( **Ghaṭaśāsin** is the head of a **ghaṭikā**, an educational institution of high standard). The donees were learned in

the **vēdas**, **vēdāṅgas**, **vēdānta**, **tarka**, **Dharma śāstra**, **jyōtiṣa**, **pada**, **padakrama**, **Purāṇa**, **sāmudrika śāstra** etc. The Dōnepuṇḍi grant of Nāmaya-nāyaka[53] describes the donee Gaṇapati as the one who knew the **Praśnāṣṭaka** and who was an ocean of the knowledge of the **Vēdas** and **śastras**, and fit for the six duties enjoined on Brāhmaṇas. The Uttarēsvara grant of Kākatīya Pratāpa Rudra[54] describes the gift village as an abode of great scholars. In that village the sacrificial altars in the court-yards of the temples were crowded by the wellversed in the ṛg, **yaju** and **sāma-Vedas**; all the streets in that village covered as they were by smoke from the sacrificial altars and by men engaged in scholarly disputations day and night. Rudradēva's teacher and the donee was the great Viddanācārya. It is also stated that having obtained the village he made a grant of the same to Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vēdas, in all the **Śāstras** and **āgamas**. This indicates that many teachers were residing in Uttarēsvara to whom Viddanācārya granted the village that he received from the king.

The custom of donating Agrahāras to learned Brāhmaṇas continued during the period of Reḍḍis and Vijayanagara as well. In the kōḍūru grant of Anavōta

Reddi[55], we come across donees with suffixes like **dvivēdi**, **daivajña**, **bhatta**, **jyautiṣika** etc., which indicates that donees were scholars of eminence in the concerned subjects. The Bitragunta grant of **Vijayanagara Sangama** II[56] states that the king granted a village to 30 **Brāhmaṇas**, who followed the conduct prescribed in the **Vēdas**. Similarly, in the Satyamaṅgalam plates of Dēvarāya II[57] the donees are said to have studied the **Ṛk-śākhā** thoroughly. In one of the inscriptions belonging to **Kṛṣnarāya**, the donee Nṛsimhādhvari is described as calm, well-known and a great soul; expounder of all the **Śastras** who has achieved success in discussions; a sacrificer, who has performed all the great **yāgas**; who has controlled anger; the son of **pañcaṅgi-Viṣnayajvārya** who knows the **Vēdas**, the **vēdānta** and traditional lore. Thus it is evident that the Brāhmaṇa donees were hailing from well-educated families, often the qualifications of their fathers and grand fathers being given in detail. This seems to have been purposefully recorded. Jaimini lays down that men of good conduct should employ priests who are well-versed in the **Vēdas** and whose relatives are experts in this lore. The sacrificers should not employ a sinner or a low born man for the purpose.[59] So was the case with the relation of a Brāhmaṇa for granting him an Agrahāra.

The above discussion shows that the Agrahāras were donated following the rules laid down by the religious texts. We have to remember that we do not have sufficient evidence to support that Agrahāras were donated for the purpose of education, though education might have improved due to the founding of Agrahāras. The same can be applied to the Dēvāgrahāras. The temple as is well known was, fundamentally, a religious institution. Generally, some temples had **maṭhas** attached to them where education was imparted to the students. Some temples themselves functioned as educational institutions where mainly the **vēdas**, the epics and the **āgamas** were taught.

Generally it is held that the **Agrahāras** were endowed to promote education.[58a]. But the main intension of the donor in donating Agrahāras was to acquire religeous merit, prosperity or longerty for himself. The **Agrahāras** were granted to learned or pious Brāhmaṇas in accordance with the laws laid down in the **Dharmaśāstras**. The **Dharmaśāstras** condemn the Brāhmaṇas who do not adhere to the duties prescribed to them. The **Baudhāyana** says "Those Brāhmins who go astray and so do not perform the morning and evening adoration and who devote themselves to the works appropriate

for the śūdras, are as good as śūdras.[60] The Vāsiṣṭha also echoes the same when it lays down that Brāhmins who are not śrōtriyas, who do not teach the vēda and who do not kindle the sacred fire are reduced, while still living, to the status of a śūdra along with their families.[61] R.N.Sarma also brings to our notice that a Brāhmin devoid of learning and austerities but desirous of accepting gifts sinks (into hell) like one sitting in a stone-boat, and that Brāhmin who is not learned should be afraid of receiving gifts. The donor was also asked to select only those endowed with qualities for gifts and not those who lacked in those qualities. Thus, Āpastamba and Vāsiṣṭha prescribe that in all religious acts one should invite those Brāhmaṇas for feeding who are pure and who have studied the vēda; gifts should be distributed at a proper time and place and on the occasions of purificatory rites and only when there is a worthy accepter.[62] Manu also asserts, 'Through illumination or learning a Śūdra attains the status of a Brāhmana and a Brāhmaṇa becomes a Sudra through ignorance.[63]

The above references clearly show that the Hindu religious texts were particular about the Brāhmaṇa being well-educated, particularly when he received a gift. Hence, it is not surprising that most of the donee Brāhmaṇas

were well-educated. As the recipients of the Agrahāras were eminent scholars there is no wonder that atleast some Agrahāras developed into educational centres. In this context it may also be noted that there were **ghaṭikas** which were centres of higher education. But it is difficult to believe that all the Agrahāras were gifted to promote education since there would be numerous of educational centres in every kingdom. Besides, most of the Agrahāras were rural centres and some of them were not even villages but mere hamlets. It is highly improbable that these could support educational institutions.

A distinction is to be made between oral education and formal education. It is well-known that the donee Brāhmaṇas are said to be well-versed in the **vēda**, **vēdāṅga**, **itihāsa**, etc. Naturally one cannot expect every Brāhmaṇa to be well-versed in such a wide range of subjects. Some picked up a minimum knowledge of religious texts and rituals and earned their living as village priests.[64] Romila Thapar opines that the Brāhmanical centres, though technically open to all dvija castes appear to have attracted mainly Brāhman students. Burton stein also seems to be of the same opinion when he says that the **maṭhas** and other centres of learning in the coromandel Brāhmadēyas

served as disseminating points of high and distinctive culture not only to young Brāhmaṇas of various parts of the plain, but to those who came, often from great distances, to study and to carry back to their to home-territories ritual and theological elements which shaped the high culture in the temples and **maṭhas** of the interior cultural hinterland.[65] The students of **kṣatriya** status being largely members of royal families, often had their own preceptor at the court who would be a learned Brāhmaṇ.[66] It is equally doubtful whether the kṣatriya princes studied at the Agrahāras, and studied the same subjects that are prescribed in the Hindu texts. The **Arthaśāstra** prescribes the study of the Trivēda, Ānvikṣiki, Vārta, Daṇḍanīti, Purāṇa, Itivṛtta, ākhyāyika, udāharaṇa, Dharmaśāstra and Arthaśāstra for the prince. Besides he had to receive military training relating to the operation of the different elements of the army such as elephants, horses, chariots and weapons of war.[67]

But it is very doubtful whether the princes actually learnt all these subjects. No doubt, some of the kings are described as well-educated. The Tāḍikoṇḍa plates of Ammarāja II describe the king as an adept in all the disciplines intended to be mastered by a king; highly

skilled in wielding different kinds of weapons and an expert in the treatise pertaining to elephants and horses.[68] In another inscription a prince is said to be an expert in a number of war weapons such as **asi**, **musala**, **kaṇaya**, **kampana**, **mudgara**, **tōmara**, **musuṇḍi**, Bhiṇḍivāla, **cakra**, **krakuca**, **kārmuka**, and **nārāca**.[69] Yet we do not have evidences to the princes having studied the **Vēda**, **Vēdāṅga** etc. The donees to whom the kings donated Agraharas had almost always studied **Vēda**, **Itihāsa**, **Purāṇa** etc. which was a religious study, but not the military sciences that were to be studied by the princes. So **Agrahāra** may not be a suitable place of education for a kshtriya.

Coming to the education of the Vaiśyas the inscriptions do not give any information about the pattern of education given to them. According to Manu, the Vaiśya should have knowledge of the value of gems, pearls, corals, metals,cloth, perfumes and condiments; of the manner of sowing seeds and the qualities of soils, of weights and measures, of the varieties of merchandise etc.[70] In theory the Vaiśyas could study the **Vēda**. But in practice, in the south they might not have studied the **Vēdas** The same can be argued regarding the Sūdras. With the growth of temple and **maṭha** as institutions , it is

generally believed that education was opened to every section of the society. But it cannot be admitted that the people of the fourth class were benefitted by this to any appreciable extent. It has to be noted, in this connection, that the Sudra writers from non-princely groups are very scarce even during the height of vīra-śaivism which is believed to be a religion of reform. Some isolated references like the **Malkapuram** inscription of **Kākatīya Ganapati** are quoted.[71] The inscription shows that provision was made for feeding all the people without distinction of caste and creed including the **caṇḍālas**. But it is highly improbable that the sanskrit college which was set up by the king in the same inscription which had excellent teachers in **Ṛk, Yajur** and **Sāma Vēdas, pada, vākya, Pramāna** etc., admitted caṇḍālas into this college. There is no denying, however, that the śūdras acquired their technical skills hereditarily. Some primary education is also probable. However, this has nothing to do with the Agrahāras and its Brāhmaṇa teachers.

The temple institution certainly provided a lift for the śūdras in the society. It was a process in which the religion expanded its economic base. Religious equality notwithstanding, education should have still

eluded the śūdras. Romila Thapar feels that although impoverished students were accepted and are referred to it seems likely that well-to-do students would naturally have been preferred. This would coincide with the fact that only in sufficiently wealthy families it would be possible for the sons to have enough leisure to do justice to a Brāhmaṇical formal education. The very nature of this education was such as to provide qualifications for those intending to become priests, rulers, bureaucrats and men of letters. For those going into less exalted professions, such an education would have been largely a luxury.[72] Therefore the śūdras who formed the section of the population especially that of agriculturists would not have enough leisure or wealth to support an institution like Agrahāra for their studies.

The above discussion leads us to conclude that the Agrahāras were donated to learned Brāhmaṇas & with a desire to acquire religion merit, prosperity in longerty. Promotion of education due to the Agrahāra system was incidental. Further, in all probability, even in the field of education only Brāhmaṇas were benefitted by the Agrahāras since the educational requirements of kshatriyas & vaiśyas ( the other two sections of the 'dvijas') were different from those of

the Brāhmaṇas and their association with the Agrahāra as student was perhaps, very negligible if not nil. The śūdras for obvious reasons disnot have anything to do with the education imparted in the Agrahāras.

## Social Mobility

The institution of the Agrahāra, from the view point of social mobility has well represented the mobility of the major classes of society. This can be two fold viz., the donor and the donee. The kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas as the donors and the donees represent an identical social scale from this angle. The Brāhmaṇas who accepted Agrahāras from the kṣatriyas have also accepted them from the śūdra rulers as time passed on , with the changing situations in the socio-religious and economic spheres. Though the acceptance of Agrahāras by the Brāhmaṇas from the śūdras logically indicates the downward mobility of the Brāhmaṇas, the internal evidence of the Agrahāra records themselves contradicts such a view since the Brāhmaṇas were very much respected: On the other hand the Brāhmaṇas too as the donors also suggest their changed perceptions since it was hitherto believed by them that basically they were donees who depended upon such grants for their livelihood.

There need not be any stress on the mobility of the **kṣatriyas**. The early royal dynasties of Āndhra remained constant in their social position and their role as donors warrents no repetition here.

It is interesting that the vaiśya class is represented both as donors and donees and the specific use of **vaiśyāgrahāra** has a special significance as it suggests that they were conscious to retain the term vaiśya as donees. In this connection we may note that this class played a dominant role in the Buddhist religious establishments. However, there is lack of epigraphical evidence in regard to their participation in the Hindu religion and more so with the Agraharas during the early period. The reason, as already noted, must have been due to the nature of Agrahāra donations. So it may be said that they maintained more or less a steady social status from the view point of Agrahāra.

Through the Agrahāra system, we may observe the social mobility of the Śūdras. During the early period, the information regarding the Śūdras is sparsely recorded in the inscriptions. However as **Arthasiris** or share holders of the crops of gifted villages. As a result they had a close

relationship with the donee Brāhmaṇas. With the passage of time these **Arthasiris** became strong peasant groups commanding a great deal of the fact that from the Eastern Cāḷukyan period onwards the kuṭumbins are almost invariably addressed along with royal officers, village officers while making the grants of villages by king. From this period onwards the Śūdras also appear as donor in the inscriptions recording the grants of Dēvāgrahāras. Some of the royal dynasties like the Kākatiyas and Reddis belonged to the Śūdra class. In this connection B.Rajendra Prasad opines that the royal dynasties claiming themselves as Satśūdras indicates their conscious pride in recording their caste, and marks a period of upward social mobility of the Śūdras.[73] ( Prof.B.Rajendra Prasad, AIHC & Archaeology, S.V.University, Tirupati, personal communication) The Dēvāgrahāra system required the services of every community of the Śūdra section of the society. Besides the peasants who cultivated the temple lands, the others like trustee members, dancing girls, musicians, garland makers, potters, smiths, barbers, etc., were involved actively in the Dēvāgrahāra system. This trend reached its peak during the Vijayanagara period .

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


1. B.G.Gokhale, 'The Early Buddhist Elite,' JIH, XLIII,pp.392-402;'The **Brāhmaṇas** in Early Buddhist Literature', JIH XLVIII, pp.51-61.
2. Y.Krishnan, '**Was there any conflict between Brāhmaṇa and Buddhists?**', IHQ, XXX, pts1-4 pp.167-177.
3. R.N.Sharma, '**Brahmins through the Ages**, Delhi, 1977.
4. Jogiraj Basu, **India of the Age of Brāhmaṇas**, Calcutta, 1969.
5. B.G.Gokhale, **Op.cit.**, pp.392-396.
6. Y.Krishnan, **Op.cit.**, pp.169-172.
7. **Ibid.**, p.172.
8. Also see R.S.Sharma, '**Stages in Social Evolution in Ancient India**', pp.77-81, in **Indian Culture and Literature**, Pandit Gangaram Commemoration Volume,Ed., Mohan Chand, 1980; and Amaury de Rein Court, **The Soul of India**, Delhi, 1986, pp.62-72.
9. EI, VIII, p.59.
10. EI, XXV, p.47.
11. '**Dhārikātura** grant of **Acaṇḍavarman**', year 35, EI XXXVI,p.6.
12. EI, XV, pp.249-258.
13. **Ibid.**, p.253. 14 EI V ff 116 [illegible]

14. EI, V, pp.118-121.

15. Bongard Levin, **Studies in Ancient India and Central Asia**, pp.154-155.

16. Burton Stein, **Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India**, Delhi, 1980, p.71.

17. EI, V, pp.131-134.

17a. EI, III PP.220-222.

18. **Ibid.**, note 2, p.221.

19. Krishna Mohan Reddy, p., **'Merchants in early Andhradesa'**, PAPHCT XVII, pp.41-44.

20. EI, XXXIII, pp.141-146.

21. EI, XXXIV, pp.42-43.

22. JAHRS, VIII, pp.168-170.

23. SII, X, no.427.

24. Burton Stein, **Op.cit.** p.17.

25. **Ibid.**, pp.72-73.

26. EI, I, pp.2-10.

27. EI, XII, pp.133-136.

28. EI, XXIII, p.56.

29. N.K.Reddy, **Op.cit**, p.51.

30. **Ibid.**

31. JAHRS, XXI, pp.113-120.

32. EI, V, pp.142-151.

33. SII, X, no.435.

34. **Gau.Dh.s.2.55;7.4**, quoted by R.N. Sharma, **Brāhmiṇs through the ages**, p.81.

35. **Mahābhāsya**, 4.2.2.2., p.104, quoted by R.N. Sharma.

36. **Mahābhāsya**, 1.1.4.7., Op.cit..

37. Kane, P.V., **History of Dharmaśastra**, vol.2, part 2, p.360.

37a. **Aśvamēdhita** 56.21.

38. Kane, Op.cit, p.361.

38a. Quoted by P.V.Kane, Ibid.

39. Ibid., note 882, p.361.

40. EI, XXXII, pp.175-182.

41. Ibid., p.178.

42. Ibid., note 1.

43. EI, IX, pp.99-102; '**Talamanci** plates'.

44. EI, XXXVIII, pp.38-76.

45. EI, XXXV, pp.146-150.

46. EI, XXVII, pp.312-316.

47. EI, XIII, pp.88-99.

48. Sankaranarayanan, S., The **Viṣṇukuṇḍis and their Times**, Delhi, 1977 pp.145-146.

49. Ibid.

50. EI, XXXI, pp.129-136.

51. EI, V, pp.70-100.

52. EI, XXXIII, pp.219-226.

53. EI, IV, pp.356-358.

54. EI, XXXVIII, p.76.

55. EI, XXV, pp.137-146.

56. EI, III, pp.32-35.

57. Ibid, pp.39-41.

58. EI, XIX, pp.131-134.

58a. S.Leela Shantakumari: History of Agrahāras karnataka, pp. 39-63, under 'Agrahāra and education'.

59. **Jaiminīya**, **SS** 10, quoted by R.N.Sharma, Op.Cit., p.109.

60. **Bau.Dh.S.II.3.20**, quoted by R.N.Sharma, **Brāhmiṇs through the ages**, p.132.

61. **Vas.Dh.S.**III.1-2, quoted in **ibid**.

62. **AP.Dh.S.** II.6-15,9-10; **Vas.Dh.S**.3.8, and IV.30, quoted in **ibid**.

63. **Manusamhita**, 10-65; quoted by Jogiraj Basu, **India of the age of Brāhmaṇas**, Calcutta, 1969, p.31.

64. Thapar, Romila., **Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations**, Delhi,1979, pp.140-141.

65. Burton Stein, **Op.cit.**, p.142

66. Ronila **Thapar**,**Op.cit.**, p....

67. Majumdar, R.C.,(Ed.) **The Age of Imperial Unity**, Bombay,1990, pp.585-586.

68. EI, XXIII, p.161.

69. SII,IV, No.677.

70. **Manu** IX 329-332, **Classical Age**, p.588, note 3.

71. SII X, pp.205-209.

72. Romila Thapar, **Op.cit**. p.141.

73. Personal Communication, Prof.B.Rajendra Prasad, AIHC & Archeology, S.V.University, Tirupati.

# CHAPTER - 1V

## *AGRAHARA AND RELIGION*

## Agrahāra and Religion

The institution of Agrahāra itself is an outcome of religion. Hence the Brahmadēyas were the important centres of religious practices like performing **yajnas**. With the evolution of temple it became the principal centre of religious activities, of course, involving all the sections of the society in one way or the other. In most of the cases the villages were donated to Brāhmaṇas and temples with a motive of acquiring religious merit which is crystal clear from the study of inscriptions.

In the early period we find a prolification of Brahmadēyas along with the not so well-developed Dēvāgrahāra system, though the incipient stage can be tracked back at least to the Ikṣvāku period. Here it bears repetition that the donation of a village to a Brāhmaṇa or a temple appears to have followed certain frame work of rules which had a strong religious sanction and a lively social participation, not to speak of a liberal economic co-operation. In course of time it became a natural part of the society that even individuals from lower social hierarchy associated themselves zealously with this institution. One important aspect that has to be observed in the concept of

Brahmadēya and Dēvāgrahāra systems is, that the institution survived, in fact progressed, notwithstanding the changes both subtle and violent in the religious spectrum of the contemporary society and royalty. Therefore, the fundamental theme of the Brahmadēya, Dēvāgrahāra system; whether it played a catalyst role or the opposite in the formation and development of religious institutions is an important question to be probed into.

Stress is laid here on the strong religious flavour of the Agrahāras as different from the generally believed economic and educational causation in the promotion of the Agrahāra. Manu says that the learned Brāhmaṇas should be exempted from taxes since the meritorious acts of the learned Brāhmaṇas contribute to the increase of the king's life, wealth and kingdom.[1] According to Vasiṣṭha Brāhmaṇas paid their tax in the form of their pious and charitable acts(**iṣṭapūrta**).[2] The **Viṣṇu Smṛiti** says that the Brāhmaṇas should be immune from taxation, as long as they pay their taxes in the form of their religious deeds.[3] The classical writer Arrian observed that sophists, were free from doing any labour or from contributing share of the produce of their labour, but he clearly indicates that

they had to perform sacrifices to Gods on behalf of state and to predict about the seasons of the year or any calamity threatening the kingdom.[4] The law makers such as Āpastamba, Vasiṣṭha, Manu and Viṣṇu and the **Arthaśāstra** hold that the exemption from taxes was exclusively allowed to the learned Brāhmaṇas, philosophers and sophists, śrotriyas and those who performed religious services beneficial to the state. According to Vasiṣṭha the king shares one sixth of the Brāhmaṇas spiritual merit and the latter should not be devoured because he makes the **Vedas** prosper and secures immunity from danger or any calamity for the kingdom.[5] There can be little doubt that these religious texts induced the Hindu kings to donate villages to Brāhmaṇas as Brahmadēyas. During the medieval period, due to the influence of Puranic religion, the importance of the **dāna** concept, especially to the temple considerably increased. Hēmādri's **Dānakhaṇḍa** which treats innumerable gifts of a religious character, inspired the public to make gifts to acquire eternal merit, and to ensure wealth and happiness in the future births. In the Pasumarru grant of the Eastern Cāḷukya King Viṣṇuvardhana III the king is described as having made **tulā** and other **daśavidhamahādānas** in the country extending between Kancī and the confluence of the Gangā and Sāgara.[6] These **mahādānas** were

increased to sixteen during the later centuries. One of the records of Anavēmā Reddi states that he has made the **dānas** including **Brahmāṇḍadāna**, **Kanakadharādāna**, **Gōsahasradāna**, **kalpatarudāna** etc.

This is borne by the fact that, after the disappearance of the Ikṣvākus, we find suddenly all the royal dynasties endowing Brahmadēyas to Brāhmaṇas. This can be nothing but the religious zeal of the kings who could not do so during the period of Budhist dominence. Another significant feature is, while the Budhist endowment of villages were recorded on stone, the Hindu kings of early Andhra issued copper plate charters.

The Koṇḍamudi plates of the Bṛhatphalāyana Jayavarman say that fortune, wealth, power and victory weere given by the donees to the king as a **reward for the grant**.[8] More important and direct information is supplied by the Penugoṇḍa plates of Hastivarman[9] which state that the grant was made for the increase of the virtue(**dharma**), longevity and strength of the king, for his passage to heaven (**svar-nayana**) and for his attainment of religious merit. Another charter of the same dynasty registers the grant of an Agrahāra made for thee increase of the donor's

religious merit, longevity, army, animal corps, wealth and sovereignty and for the prosperity, success and increasing welfare of the donor's family and clan.[10] In another instance an Agrahāra is said to have been endowed for the sake of the donor's salvation as far as the seventh generation.[11] In this context an inscription from Amaravati belonging to the reign of Kākatiya Ketali is interesting. It records that the king Kēta granted the village Kōkallu to Brāhmaṇas for the merit of his mother (v.48); Ganjipāḍu, Callagārā and Tāḍivāya for the merit of his father (v.49); Ammalapunḍi for the merit of his elder brother (v.50); and Sattenapalli, Uppalapāḍu, Cintapalli, Vonkadōṇa and Kuntimaddi for his own merit (v.51).[12] Agrahāras were also donated for gaining victory in war, increasing one's own merit, increasing the length of life and power.[13]

The Omigōdu grant of pallava Siṃhavarman II records an endowment of Agrahāra for the increase of vitality, strength and victory.[14] Similarly the Ipur plates of Viṣṇukuṇḍin Govindavarman's son Mādhavavarman[15] say that he endowed a village to the Brāhmaṇa for the sake of the prosperity of his family.

From the above discussion it becomes evident that the donations of **Agrahāras** by the kings had a strong religious basis. That the inscriptions themselves record the intention of the donor - for the sake of victory, longevity, merit,etc. substantiates the assumption that the cause and the function of the Agrahāra was primarily religious in nature. The religious nature of the Brahmadēyas as attested to by the Hindu religious works is already noted. With the growth of the temple, this system is dimmed to a certain extent. Even the **Dēvāgrahāras** and the charities to the temple were the result of a somewhat changed outlook of the society when it began considering charities to the temple in preference to the Brāhmaṇas. It is to be noted in this context that the Brāhmaṇas were considered **bhūdēvatas**. Later when the idol worship and temple building acquired significance people began endowing directly to the original gods (**dēvatās**) installed in temples. But the purpose basically remained the same i.e. acquiring the religious merit. In a number of Agrahāras we come across shares being allotted to goods on par with the Brāhmaṇas, and vice versa in the Dēvāgrahāras, suggesting that the gods and Brāhmaṇas were treated with equal respect. Whenever endowments of villages were made for the purposes

other than religious, such as to celebrate a victory, to favour a general or a relative the actual intention behind the endowment was clearly recorded in the inscription.

It is to be observed here, however, that during the medieval period though the Agrahāras were donated to Brāhmaṇas with a religious motivation the donor sometimes did not bother to specifically mention such a religious intention. This must have been due to the popularity of the Agrahāra, its religious intention being well-known in the society. This is, however, reflected in the benedictory and imprecatory portions of the Agrahāra grants where people are warned against the confiscations.

**Vedic Religion:-**

The Śatavāhana kings promoted the vedic religion as attested by their inscriptions. This dynasty was the first to encourage vedic sacrifices in Āndhra. B.S.L.Hanumatha Rao opines that, Śātakarṇi I, the Āndhra - Śātavāhana contemporary of puṣyamitra seems to have realised the might of the rising Brāhmaṇical reaction, comparable to the Brāhmaṇical reaction of the Śungas against the religious policy of Mayuras vindicated by the performance of two **Aśvamēdhas** by Puṣyamitra.[16] The Nānāghat inscription

records a long list of Vedic sacrifices preformed by Śātakarṇi I such as **Rājasūya**, **Aśvamēdha**, **Ajanyādheya**, **Añarambhanīya**, **Saptadaśatirātra** etc.,. During this period it seems that especially, **Aśvamēdha** and **Rājasūya** became more political and some political achievement of great significance such as - founding a new dynasty raising one's dynasty to imperial dignity etc.[17] Yajnaśrī śātakaraṇi performed some **yajnas**.[18]

The Ikṣvākus who succeeded the Śātavāhanas also propagated vedic sacrifices. The founder of the dynasty ŚriCāntamūla himself performed **Agniṣṭoma**,**Aśvamēdha** and **Vājapēya**.[19] According to tradition many hundreds of Brāhmaṇas were brought from the country north of the vindhyas by the first ruler of the Ikṣhvākus.[20]

The kings of the post Ikṣvāku period such as the Śālankāyanas, Bṛhatpalayanas are credited with not only the performance of vedic sacrifices but also with the endowment of Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas. The Śālakāyana king vijayadēvavarman[21] is described as the performer of **Aśvamēdha**. The Pallava King Śivaskandavarman is said to have performed **Agniṣṭōma**, **Vajāpēya** and **Aśvamēdha** sacrifices.[22] Simhavarman and KumāraViṣṇu II of the same dynasty also performed the **Aśvamēdha** sacrifices.[23] It is very interesting

to note that Vikramendravarman II of Viṣṇukuṇḍin dynasty, is described as the one who celebrated a hundred thousand **bahusuvarṇa**, **puṇḍarīka**, **puruṣamēdha**, **vājapēya**, **yūdhya**, **ṣōdaśin**, **rājasūya**, **pradhirājya**, **prājāpatya** and various other sacrifices and thus established his supremacy.[24] Though this is a clear exaggeration it indicates the King's obsession with the sacrifices. Likewise, in the Rāmatīrtham plates of Indravarman of the same dynasty the King is said to have performed eleven **Aśvamēdhas** and thousands of other sacrifices.[25] The Khanāpur plates of Mādhavavarman also register that, the king performed **puṇḍarīka**, **Bahusuvarṇa** and eleven other unspecified sacrifices. From this period onwards a steady decline in the performance of Vedic sacrifices is noticed. Though some of the Eastern Cāḷukyas were **ParamaBrāhmaṇyas** they did not seem to have performed sacrifices though described themselves as **anekāśvamēdhā vabṛthasnātānām**. It is possible that the kings donated Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas on the occasion of performing Vedic sacrifices. It is to be noted here that some Brāhmaṇa donees are described as the performers of **Agniṣṭōma** and other sacrifices.[26] The Pallivāḍa grant of Viṣṇuvardhana II mentions that the donee's grandfatner, Dhruvasena performed sacrifices from **Agniṣṭōma** to

Paundarīka.[26a] Here we may recollect that Yajana and Yājana are included in the **ṣatkarmas**. These sacrifices by the kings represented a specific purpose. The sacrifices like **Rājasūya**, **Vājapēya**, **Aśvamēdha**, **Bṛhatpatisava**, **Sautrāmaṇi**, **puruṣamēdha** etc., are connected with Kingship and paramount sovereignty. According to the Satapatha Brāmanana one becomes **Rājā** or King by performing the **Rājasūya** sacrifice; by performing the **vājapēya** sacrifice one becomes a **sāmrāṭ**. **Rājya** is of a lower order, **Sāmrājya** is of a superior order. A Rāja or King longs to be an emperor (Sāmrāṭ).[27] The **Aśvamēdha** is called as the King of all sacrifices in the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa**. It also observes; one who performs the **Aśvamēdha** conquers all the quarters; conquers the world, the priest makes him a ruler and upholder. If a Rājanya performs the horse-sacrifice, he becomes a great fighter. He acquires all kingdoms, all peoples, all the Vedas, all the Gods and all created beings. This must be the reason for which the kings of the post Ikṣvāku dynasties of Āndhra performed so many sacrifices. Probably Kings granted villages also on the occasion of performing **Yajñas**. The same religious obligation also stimulated the growth of Brahmadēyas during this period. From the Cāḷukyan period onwards there was a decline in the donations of Agrahāras. This was mainly due to the growing popularity of idol worship and temple institution.

**Vaiṣṇavism**:-

The earliest traces of **Vaiṣṇavism** in Āndhra are found from the Śātavāhana period onwards. The **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** says that the Āndhra tribes were purified by their adherence to Vaiṣṇavism.[28] The Nāsik inscription of Bālasrī compares her son Gautamiputra with Rāma and Keśava who are identical with Balarāma or Sankarṣaṇa and Vāsudēva Kṛṣṇa.[29] During the Ikṣvāku period also a temple for **Aṣṭabhuja svāmin** identified by some scholars with Viṣṇu was built on the Seṭhagiri. The analysis of personal names occurring in the inscriptions also helps to understand the religious conditions of a particular period. In this incidence the personal name of Viṣṇurudra ŚivalānandaŚatakarani who took part in the construction of the above said temple indicates that both Viṣṇu and Śiva were worshipped equally and there existed no hostility between Viṣṇavas and Śaivas in this incipient stage.[30] Most of the royal dynasties were not influenced by their personal religious leanings while making Brahmadēya grants.

The Pallavas some of whom were **Parambhāgavatas** and **Bhagavatpādānudhyātas**, had personal names such as Simhavarman, Kumāraviṣṇu, Viṣṇugōpa which suggests

that they favoured Vaiṣṇavism. Some other Pallava Kings like Śivaskandavarman, Nandivarman as their names indicate followed Saivism. In this context it may be remembered that the early Pallavas irrespective of their personal faiths, constructed temples for both Viṣṇu and Śiva like the ones at Mahābalipuram. It may be noted that on the examination of post Ikṣvāku Brahmadēya grants that a majority of the donee Brāhmaṇas were Śaivates and Vaiṣṇava donees formed a minority. Remarkably, this trend continues up to vijanagara period and the Vaiṣṇavaites appear with increased frequency in Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in the Vijayanagara period.

A study of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras of the Cālukya period indicates a clear dominance of the Brahmadēyas over the Dēvāgrahāras. Two Brāhmaṇa donees viṣṇu śarman and vasuśarman figure in one of the Agrahāra grants of cālukya jayasimha I.[31] Again Svāmiyaśas and Viṣṇuyaśas, Viṣṇuśarman are also recorded as donees.[32] Likewise the Brāhmaṇa donees who received the village is Govindaśarman son of Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa in the Indian museum plates of Ganga Dēvendravarman.[33] In another Eastern Ganga inscription one viṣṇuśarman is endowed with an Agrahāra along with his brothers Śivaśarman, Kumāraśarman etc.[34]

Here it must be noted that sometimes we come across donees bearing vaiṣṇavaite names while their fathers had saivaite names and vice-versa. This on the one hand shows the cosmopolitan attitude of the society and on the other renders the study of religion based on personal names difficult.

With the growth of the temple institution, naturally an increase in the Dēvāgrahāras can be seen during the medieval Āndhra, which contributed to the furtherance of both Viṣṇavism and Śaivism. The Dēvāgrahāras also were involved with the same kind of stipulations, rules and regulations of the Brahmadēyas. But through the mechanism of the Dēvāgrahāra almost the entire society was involved in the functioning of the temple. During the medieval period we find an amazing growth of temple as social, religious and economic force due to the combined effect of changing ideologies and religions which inturn were also benefited by the temple mechanism. The royalty and the rich who hitherto endowed villages to Brāhmaṇas began endowing the same to the temples. But the purpose and the wish of the donor is the same when he endowed a Dēvāgrahāra, which is nothing but religious. In this

context it should be observed that many kings endowed Dēvāgrahāras to both Viṣṇu and Śiva ignoring their personal faiths which attests to their religious tolerance and probably, also their political expediency and prudence. The sources being so it becomes difficult to assess which king was responsible for the growth of a particular religious sect. Besides, throughout the period of religious history of Āndhra, except during some brief periods of vīraśaivism and vīravaiṣṇavism, Viṣṇu or Śiva did not matter much for the people to worship as observed by not only the personal names but also by the construction of temples for these two sects in the same compound.

The British museum plates of Pallava queen Cārudēvi[35] refer to an incipient stage of the Dēvāgrahāra concept wherein it is recorded that a field was donated to the god Nārāyaṇa of the Kūli Mahātāraka temple at Dālūra making it a means for increasing their length of life and power. Further the inscription records that knowing this, the villagers and officials should exempt this field with all immunities and cause it to be exempted just as in the case of a Brahmadēya. The Śālankāyana king Hastivarman is said to have endowed a village to sixty Brāhmaṇas who were associated with the worship of the temple of Nārāyana

there. The inscription further says that the village should be exempted for the sake of god Nārāyaṇa[36] The narasingapalli plates of Eastern Ganga Hastivarman are interesting in that, they register the endowment of a village specifically termed Dēvāgrahāra to god Nārāyaṇa for the increase of the religious merit of the donor's parents and the donor.[37] The god Nārāyaṇa is described as who lies on the seven seas, who is sung in seven hymns, who is the sole lord of seven worlds and who has the designation **Raṇabhītodaya**.[38] The inscription also says that the said donation was for the sake of making offerings known as bali, caru and satra and for the repairs of the temple.(Line 14) The boundaries are also delineated elaborately and carefully. It is well known that generally the boundary stones of the villages granted to śaiva temples bear triśula or nandi while those of the villages granted to vaiṣṇava temples have vāmana.

During the Eastern Cālukya period though the temple building activity assumed greater speed, still the number of Brahmadēyas interestingly dominate the Dēvāgrahāras. The Piṭhāpuram pillar inscription of Mallidēva and Manma-satya II records an endowment of a village to the god Kuntīmādhavadēva for various offerings and worship, for daily and periodical

rites, monthly festivals and annual festivals, and for various expenses on account of singing, dancing, music etc.[39] Another inscription from the same place registers an endowment of another village to the same God.[40]

During the Kākatīya period though many kings were Śaivaite by faith, Vaiṣṇavism made a steady progress. A large number of gifts by Kākatīya subordinates and ministers to the vaiṣṇava temples are recorded in the inscriptions. It may be noted here that though many plots of land, cows, jewels and cash were donated to temples, during this period the Dēvāgrahāra grants are very few and far between. Another significant feature, surprisingly, is that though there was an enormous growth of the temple the frequency of donating Brahmadēyas did not diminish. Yet another notable feature is that the number of the Dēvāgrahāras donated to Vaiṣṇavaite temples is far less when compared to those granted to Śaivaite temples during the Kakatiya period. Even during the period of the Reḍḍis the same phenomenon can be observed. In this connection it is to be remembered, however, that despite with less endowment of villages Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism touched the peak with the endowments of other kind which saw the participation of the common man. An inscription from

Krishna district belonging to Śaka 1181 records a gift of a village to God Pratāpanarasimha.[41] Another inscription belonging to śaka 1254 registers a gift of land forming it into a village to God Śantanarasimha.[42] The Reḍḍi King Pedakōmaṭi Vēma granted a village in Guntur district to the God Dāśarathi on the occasion of a lunar eclipse.[43]

The number of Brahmadēyas was less than that of the Dēvāgrahāras during the Vijayanagara period. Interestingly most of the Dēvāgrahāras were in favour of Vaiṣṇavism. Two significant inscriptions of Kṛṣṇadēvarāya from Guntur district probably suggest this. These inscriptions record both Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras. Of the six Dēvāgrahāras endowed by Kṛṣṇadēvaraya as recorded in these two inscriptions five are in favour of Vaiṣṇavaite Gods.[44] Another inscription of the time of the same king from Cuddapah district records that a village was donated by one Yallamarusaiah to the God Cennakēśava.[45] Kṛṣṇarāya also donated a village to the Ranganāthasvāmi temple at Pulivendala, Cuddapah district.[46] An interesting inscription of Kṛṣṇarāya from Koṇḍavīdu records that a village Maindavolu was endowed and another village which was previously granted was restored to the temple of Rāghava.[47] An inscription from Nellore registers an endowment of a

village to the deity Ahōbalēśvara of Tiruvīdu.[48] During the reign of Sadāśivarāya the God Lakṣmīnārāyana received the gift of a village on the occasion of a lunar eclipse.[49] The instances can be multiplied with regard to the Dēvāgrahāras during this period. It would be suffice to say, based on the evidence of Dēvāgrahāras, as already noted, that Vaiṣṇavism received considerable royal patronage during the Vijayanagara period.

**Śaivism:-**

Śaivism appears to be more ancient and popular religion in Āndhra as suggested by the famous Linga of Paraśurāmēśvara temple at Guḍimallam (Satavahna period). Later, during the Ikṣvāku period also there were more Śaivaite temples. In this connection it may be repeated that a village was donated as **akṣayanivi** for the Puṣpabhadrasvāmi temple here and this can be taken as the earliest reference to a Dēvāgrahāra made in favour of Śiva. The popularity of Śiva is also proved by the early temples from Vīrapuram, Siddhesvarm, Kudavelli, Sangamesvaram etc. A majority of the personal names of the donee Brāhmaṇas occurring in the Brahmadēya charters of the Śālankāyanas, Pallavas and Viṣṇukuṇḍins are Śaivaite. The Cikkuḷḷa plates of

Visnukundin Vikramendravarman II[50] registers the grant of a village to the Sōmagirīśvaranātha temple and the God is described as the holy Tryambaka, the lord of all the three worlds, whose crown of matted hair is whitened and rendered bright by the rays of the young moon. The benediction is worth noting as it says, "whoever obeys the grant, enjoys the happiness of the inhabitants of heaven with the hundred thousand billions of divine hosts in Rudra's world."[51] A temple for Dantimukhasvāmi is also said to have been built by Madhavavarman I of the same dynasty.[52]

During the Cālukya period, Vikramāditya I[53] endowed a village to his guru Sudarśanācārya, as **daksina** on the occasion of the king undergoing **Śaivadīksa**. Ammarāja II endowed three villages to the God Uma-maheśvara, having made them all a **Deva-bhōga**, with the exemption of all taxes, with the libation of water, as a humble gift to the deity, for the good of his people. It is interesting that the spiritual lineage of Kālamukha Śaiva saints, who were held in great veneration in Āndhradēśa, is also described in this inscription.

Śaivism appears to have enjoyed a respectable position during the Eastern Ganga period also. A Dēvāgrahāra was endowed by the King Indravarman in favour of the God

Rāmēsvara Bhaṭṭaraka towards meeting the expenses of offering, regular worship and repairs to the temple.[54] The endowment is said to have been made for the increase of the religious merit of the King's parents and the king himself. The Boḍḍapāḍu plates of Vajrahasta III[55] register the grant of a village as a **bhōga** to God Jalēśvara.

One of the inscriptions from Mānḍukēśvaram (Prakasam district) records that the Cōḷa King Cōḍamadēva Mahārāja donated a village to the God Mānḍukēśvara Srī Mahādeva.[56] One Māra, a minister of Kannara Cōḍadēva granted a village to the temple of Sōmīśvara which he himself built.[57] However, in this context it may be noted that the references to the villages granted to saiva temples during this period are not many. Nevertheless, the paucity of the **Dēvāgrahāras** should not be taken as indicating the low profile of Śaivism since most of the kings and the common people of the Cāḷukya -Ganga periods adhered to Śaivism as suggested by their declarations as devotees of Śiva and also by their personal names.

The Kākatīyas, as is well-known were staunch followers of Śaivism. The sects like **Kālamukhas**, Kāpālikas, **Śiddhas**, apart from Vīraśaivism gained prominence during

this period. An inscription from Krishna district dated Śaka 1121 records the gift of a village to God Mukti Mahesvara by a chief.[58] Another inscription from Kurnool district, dated Śaka 1134 registers a gift of several villages to God Tripurāntaka.[59] Yet another inscription records the gift of a village to the same God by one Nāmadēva Pandita, a dependent of Kākatīya Ganapatidēva.[60] The same God also received a village from the general Gangaya Sāhini for the merit of Ganapatidēva Mahārāja.[61] It is interesting to note that this God received many villages during the Kākatīya period. The famous Mālkāpuram inscription dated Śaka 1183 states that a sanskrit college, a **matha** for Śaivas and a free feeding house for feeding people were established.[62] One pinnasetti consecrated the image of pinnēsvaradeva and granted a village in favour of the deity.[63] We find the confirmation of the grant of all the villages and **Kānukas** previously granted to the temple of Tripurāntakēsvara from another inscription.[64] An inscription from Darsi belonging to Ś 1196, registers the grant of a village Aluvalapādu to Sri Tripurāntakadēva by a Mahāmandalēsvara of Rudradēva Mahārāja.[65] Likewise we find a number of Dēvāgrahāras granted to Śiva during the Kākatīya period through out Āndhra. Thus in Warangal district alone three Dēvāgrahāras are donated to Śaivaite Gods between saka

1128 and Śaka 1139.[66]

Kōmati Vēma, the Reddi King seems to have granted a village to God Śankara on the occasion of **Śivarātri**. It seems the King has visited Srīśaila on this auspicious day.[67] Even during this period it should be supposed that though many plots of land were donated to temples the village grants were very few.

During the period of Vijanagara we come across a number of Dēvāgrahāras endowed to Śiva. An inscription from Ongole (Ś1439) records the gift of a village to God Rāmēśvara dēva for the religious merit of Srikṛṣṇadēva Mahārāja.[68] Another inscription from Podili says that a village was granted to Bhīmesvara mahādēva and Kailāsanātha mahādēva of podila.[69] Yet another inscription from Cuddapah district registers a village to God Cokkanāthadēva.[70] The God Mallikārjuna of Srīparvata received a village during the reign of Immadi Narasanāyaka.[71] Kṛṣṇadēvarāya also endowed a village to the same temple.[72] An inscription belonging to the reign of Kṛṣṇrāya from Anantapur district records the gift of a village to God Vighnēśvara.[73] References to Dēvāgrahāras to Śiva during this period are many and the information

supplied by them is monotonous. It may be surmised that Śaivism was popular though on a lesser scale than the Vaiṣṇavism during the Vijayanagara period.

**Jainism:-**

Scholars like B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao ascribe an early date to Jainism in Andhra.[74] Some of the kings and queens of the Eastern cāḷukya dynasty and their officials extended their liberal patronage to Jainism. Sometimes villages were also donated to Jaina temples with the exemptions, benedictions and imprecations just as the Brahmadēyas. Ammarāja also granted a village to a jaina establishment at vijayawada.[75] The cāḷukya king Viṣṇuvardhana granted a village in 684 A.D to a Jaina mutha.[76] The Kalucembarru Grant of vijayāditya-Amma II[77] registers the gift of a village on the ocassion of **Uttarāyaṇa** with exemption from all taxes to the Jaina temple called sarvalōkāśraya-Jinabhavana. It is stated in the charter that " No one should cause any molestation ( to the enjoyment) of this village; he who does so, incurs ( the guilt of ) the five great sins: Land has been given by many ..... and has been protected by many; whosoever at any time possesses the ..... to him belongs, at that time, the reward ( of making or protecting this grant ). He who

confiscates land that has been given,' whether by himself or by another, is born as ..... for the duration of sixty thousand years! ( Lines.67-69 ). Another grant of the same king[78] records an endowment of a village to the katakābharaṇa Jinālaya with exemption from all taxes, with libations of water. This grant was also issued on the ocassion of **uttarāyaṇa**. It is curious that Ammarāja is described as Paramēśvara. King Beddega, the cāḷukya of Vēmulavāḍa granted a village for the maintenance of a Jaina temple subhadhāma Jinālaya.[79] As the evidences cited above show, villages were donated to Jaina temples on auspicious occasions like **Uttarāyaṇa**. The benedictory and imprecatory verses are also exactly the same as those of the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras.

Buddhism:-

As already noted insofar as the evidence of epigraphy goes villages were donated to Buddhist establishments from the very early period. Vāsiṣṭhiputra pulumāvi caused the endowment of the village Sāmalipada with all kinds of immunities to the **Bhikṣus** of **Bhadāyanīya** sect.[80] Gautamīputraśātakarṇi granted 200 nivartanas of land probably after making it an Agrahāra[81] to Tekirāsi.[82]

During the Iksvāku period Buddhism became very popular as attested by lavish gifts by the queens of the Iksvāku kings. But gifts of villages to the Buddhist establishments reappear from Visnukundin period. The Visnukundin king Govindavarman is stated to have gifted two villages to the **vihāra** which was constructed by his chief queen paramamahādēvi for **dīpa-dhūpa-gandha-puspa-dhvaja-pāna - bhōjana - śayanāsana - glāna - bhaisojya - khanda - sphutita - jīrna - samskāra** etc.[83] Significantly the **grant was made** on the **Vaiśākha - Pūrnima**, the birthday of Buddha. This inscription offers a glimpse of the state of the Mahāyāna Buddhism and the elaborated ritualistic worship of the Buddhist Pantheon, probably influenced by the expanding ritualistic nature of the Hindu temple during this period. Another inscription of vikramendravarman says that he granted a village to the paramabhattārika Mahāvihāra.[84] Prithvīsrīmūlarāja also gifted a village to the **Bhiksu-Sangha** which was staying in the Mahāvihāra.[85] Again during the period of kākatīyas an inscription from the Amareśvara temple registers that the king Kēta granted three villages to the Sugata Sēkhara for the increase of his merit and were exempted from all the dues including tolls.[86] It is interesting that during this period

Buddha was considered as an incarnation of Viṣṇu which is known by the karīmnagar inscription of kākatīya Rudra Dēva.[87]

From the analysis of inscriptions it is known that Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras were donated to support the persons responsible for religious institutions as well as to the temples. This practice was also taken up by the Jainas and the Buddhists. Basically the village donation by the non-Hindu sects also as intended for the same purpose and followed the same rules and regulations. In this connection it may be noted that the pictures supplied by the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras need not necessarily be matched by the information supplied by land-grants since the former involved many complex factors of economy which only the kingss and nobles could tackle, while the latter were microscopic in extent and fairly simple in .economic terms and hence appear in abundance. The comparitive positions of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras, dynasty wise can be seen from the graph.

occasions:-

The fact that Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras were donated on auspicious occasions shows the strong religious bearing

on the part of an Agrahāra. The auspicious occasions chosen for endowment of Brahmadēyas or Dēvāgrahāras include, **pūrṇimā**, **amāvāsyā**, eclipses, solstices **śrīrāmanavami**, **śivararātri** etc. The Kantēru plates of Śalankāyanas say that the charter was issued on the full moon day of **Vaiśākha** in the first year of the king's ever increasing, illustrious and victorious day.[88] Vijayadēvavarman endowed a Brahmadēya on the 10th tithi of the dark fort night of **pauṣa** in the 13th year.[89] The Penugoṇḍa plates of Hastivarman record a grant of Brahmadēya to 60 Brāhmaṇas on the 8th of the dark fort night of the month of the **Jyēṣṭa** when the Nakṣatra is **bhādrapada**.[90] Vijayaskandavarman of the same śālankāyana dynasty endowed a village to a Brāhmaṇa on the full-moon day of **Vaiśākha** in the first year of his reign.[91] The Ānandagōtrin King Dāmōdaravarman gifted a village to the Brāhmaṇas on the 13th **thithi** of the bright fort night of **Kārtīka**.[92]

The Pallava Simhavarman is said to have endowed a village on the third tithi of the bright fortnignt of **Āśvayuja**.[93] The ōmigōdu grant of Vijayaskandavarman II records the gift of te village by the king in the **Hēmanta Pakṣa** on **Trayōdaśi**.[94] Another grant of Simhavarman II from the same place says that the grant was made on the occasion

of **Pancami** of the bright fort night of **Vaiśākha**.

The Viṣṇukuṇḍins also continued the practice of endowing Agrahāras on auspicious days. The **Rāmatīrtham** plates of Indravarman register a grant of a village to a Brāhmaṇa on the 7th **tithi** of the bright fort night of the month **jyaiṣtha**.[95] Some inscription of Viṣṇukuṇḍins alsso record Agrahāras during summer or winter the auspiciousness of which is difficult to be described. Some is the case with some of the earlier charters. However, the majority of early inscriptions apparently considered auspicious occasions as important while donating Agrahāras.

An inscription of Vijayāditya II registers a grant of a village to the Brāhmaṇa on the occasion of Solar eclipse.[96] Another inscription of Vijayāditya III also record a village gift to a Brāhmaṇa on the occasion of eclipse of the moon.[97] On the occasion of **Uttarāyaṇa**, Cāḷukya Bhīma II granted a field to a Brāhmaṇa.[98] In the dark fort night of **jyaiṣtha**, on the 10th **tithi**, on Sunday 'the great auspicious **lagna**,**mrgapati**' (i.e.**simha** under the asterism), Mallapadēva granted a village to the God Mādhava.[99]

The Peṇta Pādu grant of the King Cōda Bhaktirāja records that the king gifted away three villages to Brāhmaṇas

on the full moon day of the month **Kārtīka**.[100] Another inscription belonging to **Kāmana** Cōḍa Mahārāja from Ongole district registers the gift of a village exempt from all taxes to Goddess Hōnkāradēvi on the occasion of **Viṣuvasankrānti**.[101] Another undated inscription belonging to the reign of Kulōttunga Cōḷa dēva from Gudur registers an endowment of a village free of taxes to God Tiruvēngadanātha in the month **Caitra**. Yet another inscription states that Kōta Kētarāju granted several villages to Brāhmaṇas for the merit of his mother, father, elder brother and himself on **Māgaśuddha**.[102] An inscription from Guntur district states that Godla Nārāyaṇadāsa and Godla Gōpāladāsa made a gift of a village to the temple of Bhāva Nārāyaṇadēva on the occasion of **Vaiśākha** festival.[103] Another inscription from Krisna district records that Manma Gaṇapati Dēvarāja gave a village to God Pratāpa Narasimha on the occasion of solar eclipse.[104] Yet another inscription from Guntur district registers the gift of a village by one Singavibhu on **Vaiśākha**, **Pancami**, the Sunday to God Śānta Narasimha.[105]

The Reḍḍi King Pedakōmati Vēma granted a village to God Dāśarathi on the occasion of a lunar eclipse.[106] The Kōḍūru grant of Anavōta Reḍḍi registers the grant of the village

Kōdūru to 61 Brāhmaṇas in the month of **Pauṣa**, **Darśa**, during the Solar eclipse.[107] Another inscription of Vēma says that he granted a village to a Brāhmaṇa on **Yuva Kārtika**, **śukla**.[108] Annavēma is said to have donated a village to a Brāhmana on the occasion of a lunar eclipse, **nabhasya**, full moon, Tuesday.[109]

An inscription belonging to the reign of Immadi Narasimha records a gift of village to the God Rāmadēva by one Kēsamanāyaningāru with the permission of the king on the occasion of **Śrīrāmanavami**.[110] During the period of Kṛṣṇadevarāya one Nādindla Gōpa donated a village to God Raghunāyaka on the auspicious occasion of a lunar eclipse on Wednesday, **Vaiśākha** in the year Vikrama.[111] Kṛṣṇarāya is said to have donated two villages to the God Mallikārjuna at Śrisailam on a Lunar eclipse.[112] Another inscription belonging to the reign of the same king says that Sāḷuva Gōvindaiah at the command of the king donated a village to God Burudāla Vignēsvara on the auspicious occasion of **Ekādasi**, **Āṣāḍa**.[113] One Narasaiahdēva Mahārāju is recorded as gifting a village to the God Srīrangarāju of Pulivēndla on **śukla**, **kārtika**.[114] During the medieval period the popularity of Purāṇas in the society which were recited in the temples and were also staged in villages during

festive occasions influenced the importance of donations on auspicious days like **Uttarāyaṇa**, **Śrīrāmanavami** etc. especially for the merit of the deseased of the donors. It is very interesting in this connection to note that even the village donations to Jaina temples during the Cālukya period were made during **Uttarāyaṇa**, which is certainly not an accident or coincidence but a general belief that was current during that period.

We notice that upto the Viṣṇukuṇḍin period the Brahmadēyas outnumbered ther Dēvāgrahāras. In this connection, it is to be noted that the religionof the donees of the Brahmadēyas basing on their personal names is difficult to establish. We come across personal names which can not be strictly classified into either Vaiṣṇavaite or Śaivaite. Even later from Cālukyan period onwards this trend continues. The king's personal religion did not interfere in endowing villages to Brāhmaṇas and temples though belonged to other than his faith. However, in the case of the Dēvāgrahāras it can be clearly stated that a village was endowed to a particular God where as in the case of Brahmadēyas it is difficult to say. Hence, emphasis is laid here to assess the religion, on the Dēvāgrahāra system. A notable feature regarding religion is that

Śaivism was a dominant religion when compared to the Vaiṣṇavism up to the Reḍḍi period, is suggested by the study. Vaiṣṇavism assumed much significance and overtook Śaivism during the Vijayanagara period.

Through this study it may be understood that the influence of Agrahāra on the contemporary religion was insignificant while the impact of the comtemporary religion on the Agrahāra was outstanding and it manifested itself throughout in the Agrahāra system.

Iks: Ikṣvāku

And: Ānanda Gōtra

Brh: Bṛhatphalāyana

Sal: Śālankāyana

Pal: Pallava

Vis: Viṣṇukuṇḍin

EGn: Eastern Ganga

ECa: Eastern Cāḷukya

Col: Cōḷa

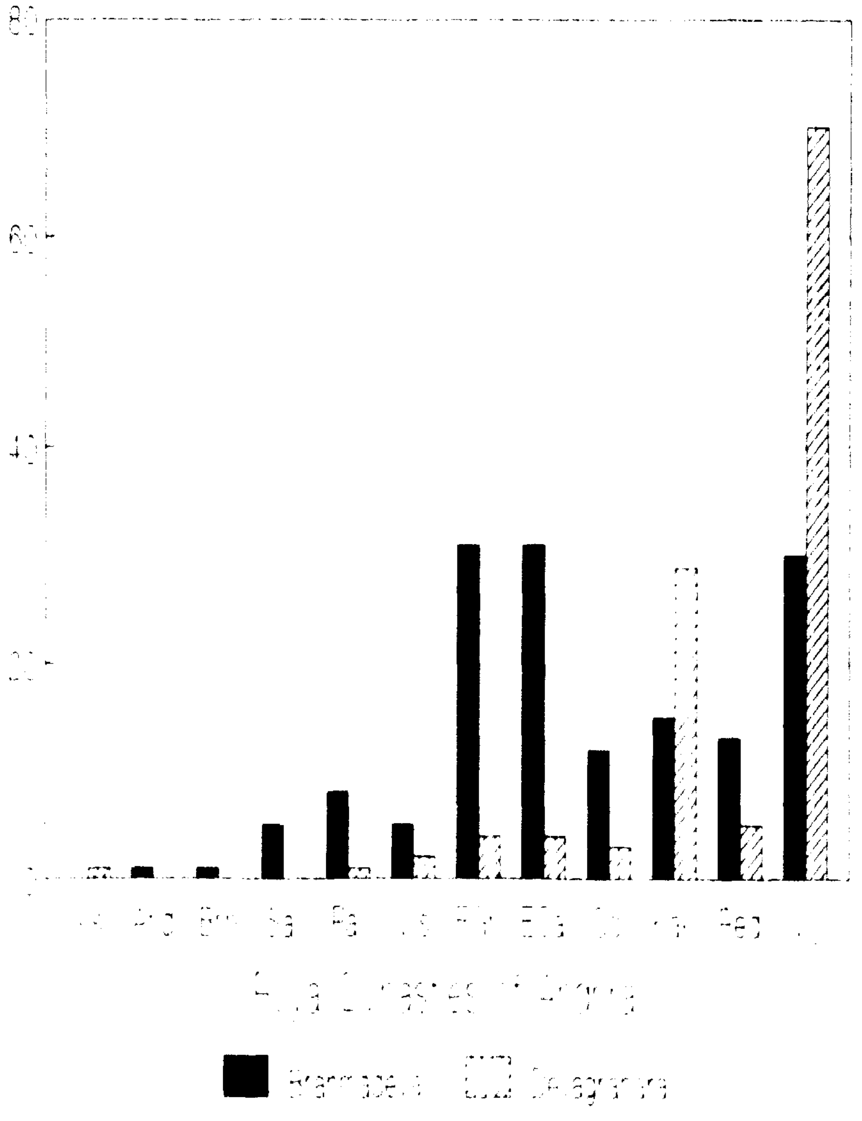
Kak: Kākatīya

Red: Reḍḍi

Vij: Vijayanagara

Frequency of

## Brahmadeyas and Devagraharas



## Notes and References:-


1. Manu,VII,136.
2. Vas.Dh.s.43-6;XIX.23.
3. Viṣṇu,III.26-7.
4. Arrian,XI.
5. Vas.Dh.s.1.42-44.
6. AR Ep.,1913-14,NO.A9.
7. AR Ep.,1915,No.20.
8. EI,VI,PP.315-320.
9. EI,XXXV,PP.145-150 Lines.1-6.
10. EI,XXXVI,PP.1-5.
11. 'Maṭṭēpāḍu plates of Dāmōdaravarman',EI,XVII,PP.327-330.
12. EI, VI, P.156.
13. 'Maidavolu Plates of Sivaskandavarman',EI,VI,PP.84-108.
14. 'Ōmigōdu Grant of SimhavarmanII', the 4th year,EI,II PP.252-258.
15. EI,XVII,PP.335-337.
16. B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao,Religion in Āndhra, Hyderabad,1993,PP.208-210.
17. Ibid.
18. EI I,PP.95-96.
19. EI,XX,'Nagarjuna Konda inscriptions'.B.2

20. B.V.Krishna Rao, **History of the Early Dynasties of Āndhradeśa**, Madras, 1942, P.53.

21 EI, IX, PP.56-58.

22. EI.I, PP.2-10.

23. EI, VIII, PP.159-162; 'Cendalur plates', EI, VIII, PP.233-235.

24. 'Cikkulla plates', EI, IV, P.197.

25. EI, XII, PP.133-136.

26. EI, XXIII, PP.89-90.

26a. IA, VII, PP.91-92.

27. Jogiraj Basu, **India of the age of the Brāhmaṇas**, Calcutta, 1969, P.91, Note.28.

28. **Bhāgavatapurāṇa**, IV, 4, 18.

29. EI, VIII, 'Nasik Inscriptions'.

30. **Ibid**.

31. EI, XXXI, PP.129-130, A-grant no.1.

32. **Ibid**, B&c.

33. EI, XXIII, P.74.

34. 'Cicacole plates of Devevndravarman', EI, III, P.134.

35. EI, VIII, P.143.

36. Penugoṇḍa plates, EI, XXXV, PP.145-150.

37. EI, XXIII, PP.62-67.

38. **Ibid**, Lines.12-14.

39. EI.IV, PP.83-97.

40. EI.IV, PP.226-230.

41. SII.X, No.363.

42. SII.X,No.547.

43. SII.X,No.571.

44. 'Two pillar incriptions of the time of Krishnarāya of Vijayanagara', EI,VI,PP.111-131.

45. SII,XVI,No.84.

46. Ibid,XVI,NO.45.

47. EI,VI,PP.230-233.

48. Nellore district inscriptions, copper plate no.2 PP.8-9.

49. SII,XVI,No.167.

50. EI,IV,PP.193-196.

51. Ibid.

52. 'Velpuru inscription',EI, XXXVII,P.125.

53. EI,XXXII,PP.175-182.

54. EI,XXV,PP.194-198.

55. EI,XXXIV,PP.42-43.

56. Nellore district Inscriptions, Ongole(74), Manikesvaram opposite Pandukesvara temple.

57. SII,.X,No.74.

58. SII,X,No.242.

59. Ibid.No.258.

60. SII,X,No.343.

61. Ibid.No.346.

62. Ibid.No.395.

63. Ibid. No.427.

64 Ibid.No.465.

65. **Nellore district inscriptions**, Darsi(1), PP.282-283

66. **Inscriptions of A.P. Warangal district**, Nos 49,50 & 54.

67. EI, XXI, P.270, C.Pinapāḍu grant.

68. **Nellore district inscriptions**, Ongole (71), P.1015.

69. **Ibid**, Podili(4), P.1155.

70. SII,XVI, No.40.

71. Ibid, No.43.

72. IbidNo.52.

73. Ibid,No.61.

74. B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao,**Op.cit**,PP.147-153.

75. 'Masūlipaṭnam plates,'EI,XXIV, P.268.

76. **JAHRS**, XVI, P.46.

77. EI, VII, PP.177-191.

78. 'Maliyapuṇḍi grant,' EI, IX, PP.47-56.

79. **Bharati**, March, 1967.

80. 'Nāsik inscriptions,' EI,VIII, No.3,plate II(kshl.19)

81. The term **'Agrahāra'** is not used here, but all the immunities as in the case of the **Agrahāra** are mentioned and registered.

82. **Ibid**, No.4,plate ii (ksh.13)

83. **EA**,II, P.4

84. **Ibid**

85. **EI, XXXVIII, P.192.**

86. **EI, VI, P.146.**

87. **Inscriptions of A.P, Karīmnagar district**, No.25.

88. EI, XXV, P.42.

89. EI, IX, P.56.

90. EI, XXXV, P.150.

91. EI, XXV, P.47.

92. EI, XVII, P.330.

93. EI, VIII, P.159.

94. EI, XV, P.252.

95. EI, XII, P.196.

96. EI, V, P.119.

97. EI, V, P.126.

98. **Ibid**, P.135.

99. EI, IV, P.242.

100. EI, XXXIII, PP.219-221.

101. **Nellore district inscriptions**, Ongole (90), P.1069.

102. SII, X, No.199.

103. SII, X, No.435.

104. **Ibid**, No. 364.

105. **Ibid**, No.547.

106. **Ibid**, No.571.

107. EI, XXV, P.137.

108. EI, XXI, P.268.

109. Ibid, P.270.

110. SII, XVI, No.38.

111. EI, VI, P.232.

112. SII, XVI, No.52.

113. Ibid, No.61.

114. Ibid, No.45.

# CHAPTER - V

## *AGRAHARA AND ECONOMY*

## AGRAHARA AND ECONOMY

Agrahāra as a centre of economic activity, is interwoven with complexities of revenue, tax exemption, agriculture administration, Peasantry and a whole process of agrarian relations. However, the number of Brahmadēyas in each kingdom is always less and that of non-Brahmadēyas is numerous. Therefore, the role of Brahmadēyas in the economy of the state cannot be decisive; however the fact that most of the Brahmadēyas were endowed by the kings in fertile river plains, though in a limited number, could not have been insignificant in terms of loss of revenue to the treasury. But the fact remains that an overwhelming amount of revenue was generated in non-Brahmadēya, peasant villages for the state. Burton Stein rightly observes, "However unique and important Brāhman villages as centres of civilization and agriculture may be shown to be, their place and functions can be, and have been, exaggerated, and the role of the village as a unit of society, politics and economy correspondingly distorted".[1] Hence, in the present study an assessment is made on the economic conditions and implications of the Agrāhara on the assumption that these conditions were similar as in the case of other peasant villages.

The endowment of **Agrāhara** primarily involves two factors viz. the ownership rights and the taxes.

**OWNERSHIP**:- The question of ownership of land inevitably attracts controversy regarding the proprietorship of the entire land of the state by the king and another view supporting individual ownership. Lallanji Gopal, on the basis of **Dharma Sastras** and other Sanskrit texts has dealt with these two views.[2] He supports the theory of private ownership of land. The **Arthaśāstra**, according to him deals with the rules where the cultivator had the right of alienating his field. He could also lease or sell his land.[3] Further, in Indian legal system as shown by Jolly, there was a clear distinction between the concepts of the ownership and possession. The pronoun **svam** and its derivatives are used to express ownership, while the derivatives of the root **bhuj** indicate mere possession or enjoyment.[4] Later works basing their conclusions on earlier **Smṛtis** define ownership (**svatva**) as property capable of being disposed of as one likes.[5] There is also a discussion about the nature of ownership as to whether it is a separate category (**padārtha**) or a capacity.[6]

C.Minakshi on the basis of Pallava charters opines that though the Pallava charters contain a long list of **Parihārās** and specific mention of other privileges which the donees were allowed to enjoy, not a single grant definitely confers on the donees the full proprietorship over the lands that were given to them.[7] Though the donees of the Dēvadāna and Brahmadēya lands may be considered as owners of their property in the sense that they received not only the land rent but also all the other revenue from the villages just as the state did, still the full proprietory rights of the soil were denied to them because they could not alienate the property by gift or sale, [7a] privileges which invariably mark the status of a private landlord.[8] Further, according to her, the terms such as **Bhōjakas**, **Vidyābhōga**, and **Arcanabhōgas** specifying lands enjoyed by temple **Arcakas** occurring in the Pallava charters are suggestive enough that 'the donees of Brahmadēyas and Devadānas were considered only as the enjoyers of and not the proprietors over what they possessed.[9] M.Krishna Kumari also supports the same theory. The Pithāpuram plates of Vīracōda and the Mallavaram plates of Parāntaka Cōḷa which record the gifts of villages to Brāhmaṇas, in the latter's view, did not confirm the title to the ownership of land but gave merely the title to the income

and produce of the land.[10] In this connection it may be noted that, in the Mallavaram plates of Parāntaka,[11] the King Parāntaka is said to have regranted the village to 284 Brāhmaṇas who stayed back, which was hitherto inhabited by 529 Brāhmaṇas when the village was originally granted i.e. during the period of Vīracoḍa. Some of the Brāhmaṇas, as the present inscription records, left the village since they were unable to maintain themselves with the produce. The fact that even the remaining 284 Brāhmaṇas who stayed back necessitated the regrant from the king shows that they had no hereditary proprietory rights over that village. It may even be suggested that their privileges were also regranted. Notwithstanding the above references there are some contradictory evidences against the view cited above. Many epigraphs record distribution of shares of the gift villages by the donees as soon as they were endowed to them by the kings. The Āmudālapāḍu plates of the Vikramāditya I[12] record that the donee Sudarśanācārya who received the village from the king as his **dakṣiṇa**, redistributed plots of land in the gift village among 27 Brāhmaṇas. Another grant of Cāḷukya Vishnuvardhana[13] registers the gift of the village Koneki to one Viduśarman. Having received the gift village, Viduśarman divided it into 120 shares and distributed them among 15 persons. In another inscription belonging to

the Eastern Ganga King Vajrahasta III[14] the donee Mallayaśresthin, who obtained the gift village Kuddam from the King, kept a part of the village for himself and made over the rest to 300 Brāhmaṇas. Yet another inscription belonging to the reign of SingayaNāyaka(S1290)[15] records that SingayaNāyaka granted the village Akkalapuṇḍi to one Parahitācārya. Having received the gift village, Parahitācārya, retaining half of the village for himself, bestowed the other half upon 10 Brāhmaṇas. The Uttarēśvara grant of Kākatīya Rudra[16] registers that viddanācārya who was the teacher of Prince Rudra, having obtained the village Uttarēśvara from the Prince, made a grant of the same to the Brāhmaṇas well versed in the **Vōdas**, **śāstras** and **āgamas**.

These evidences of redistribution of shares and plots by the donees are noteworthy. It indicates that the donees enjoyed certain amount of liberty which enabled them to redistribute the gift village, though this cannot be strictly called as ownership. This can however be compared with the **Kāṇi** rights occurring in some inscriptions. A Vaidumba inscription from Kalakuḍa[17] records the gift of three villages as Dēvadāna to the God Pallīsvaramudaiya mādēva. The Dēvadāna so given was made over as **Kāṇi** to one Cāmuṇḍabhaṭṭan, stipulating payment of seventh share of the

produce. D.C.Sircar, the editor of the plates says that the Dēvadāna villages were made over to Cāmuṇḍabhaṭṭa as **Kāṇi**, i.e they were leased out to him.[18]

Noboru Karashima on the basis of Tamil Lexicons, opines that **Kāṇi** is a hereditary right of possession and when applied to land, it may be regarded as a right of possession and, certainly not the right of mere cultivation.[19] He further comments that "moreover in many cases it may have carried a further sense beyond the mere right of possession to a certain plot of land. It seems to have meant the right to lead a privileged life in the village based on possession of land there. The Persian word **mirās** which replaced the word **Kāṇi** in the British revenue documents in the 18th and 19th centuries apprently conveyed such rights and thus the same meaning may be applied to **Kāṇi** also".[20] Therefore, it may be presumed that the donees of the Agrahāras enjoyed certain rights of possession if not absolute ownership in their newly acquired villages in the form of Brahmadēyas. Here it may be noted that we have no evidence for the sale of a part or whole of Agrahāra by its recipient. This leads us to conclude that the recipients of the Agrahāras cannot be considered as the "owners" in its strict sense.

The same difficulty is encountered in understanding the ownership rights of cultivators when the villages in which they lived were converted into Brahmadēyas. It is to be understood that when a village was endowed as a **Brahmadēya** the cultivators who hitherto paid their taxes to the king were obliged to pay the same to the donee **Brāhmaṇa**: This is evident by the fact that the cultivators including other communities of the gift village are often addressed by the donor while making a**Brahmadēya** grant. The lands that are cultivated by cultivators are not to be confused with the private lands owned by them in outside the village system. When a king granted a village to a **Brāhmaṇa** he was obviously directing the revenue that was to be received by him towards the Brāhmaṇa, this did not interfere with the lands of the cultivators. Though the villagers had their own plots of land the ownership of the village, technically, rested with the king and the revenue was completely the king's own. However, some villages also had the royal lands in them form which probably the king made endowments. The Cendalur plates of Pallava Kumāraviṣṇu II[21] clearly record that in the village of Cendalūra, the king's domain in the four directions amounted to 800 **Pattikas**. Of this, a field

amounting altogether to 432 **Paṭṭikas** was given by the king as a **Brahmadēya** with the exception of the land enjoyed by the temples indicating that the Dēvādāya lands did not come under the control of the donees. It is clear, therefore, that the entire village did not belong to the king here. But there was also a king's plot. In this context Lallanji Gopal's observations are worth mentioning. "If the state had proprietory right over all the agricultural land in the village the grant of the village would have implied that of the particular tract as well. It seems that what was granted in the case of villages was a right to revenue, whereas in the case of a particular field it was the proprietory right over it. The State had proprietary right only over certain fields. Agricultural land in general belonged to him who cultivated it".[22]

The fields generally belonged to peasants, though there were some tracts owned by the State, which alone it could grant.[23] The **Arthaśāstra** says that in founding a new settlementvillage consisting of a hundred to five hundred families each, should be set up at the interval of two or four miles and should be mainly inhabited by **Śūdrakarṣakas** (cultivators).[24] According to R.S.**Sharma**, during the Mauryan period, for the first time a section of the Śūdras who were

hitherto agricultural labourers, were provided with land in the new settlements and they also came to be engaged as share croppers on the crown lands.[25] The Hirehadagalli plates of the Pallava King Śivaskandavarman mention four labourers receiving half the produce(**Addhika**) who received two **Kolikas** of land.[26] One of the charters of Śālankāyanas offers interesting information. It records that Mahārāja Vijayadēvavarman endowed 20 nivartanas of land in a handsome locality and a house site to one Gaṇaśarman. A house site was also endowed to the men who received half the crop (**addhiya - manussāṇam**).[27] This probably suggests that the donee Gaṇaśarman was accompanied by cultivators to the **Agrahāra** who received the half the crop as their wages in lieu of their labour. However, Burton Stein thinks that sometimes there are references in inscriptions in which the previous cultivators are said to have been removed from the land and the village at the time of being granted. He concedes that the displacement of the previous cultivators appears to have been unusual.[28] In such cases, he presumes that, the supervision of cultivation was undertaken by Brāhmaṇa members of the **sabha**. And supervision of cultivation in most cases remained prerogative of those who had held this right prior to the grant of Brahmadēya,

and these peasants continued to retain a portion of the net proceeds of cultivation while passing to the **sabha** and that portion is called **mēlvāram**.[29] **Karashima** notices that the inscriptions of Allūr (No.692) contain the phrase **Kuḍinīkkā** which means that the previous cultivators were not evicted There is another word **Kuḍinīkki** (No.687) which means that the previous cultivators should be evicted.[30] However, most of the inscriptions, including the early charters, as noted above, address the cultivators apart from village elders and royal officials while making a village grant, indicating that they were kept informed of the grant.

During the medieval period the cultivators became strong peasant groups commanding respect and also as village administrators. One of the Sanigram epigraphs of the early Kākatīyas[31] registers that Mahāsāmanta Kākatīya Polaralasar made a gift to the God Madhukēśvara in the village of Khanḍisanagara and granted 12 sites for residential purposes, with the approval of the local **gāmuṇḍas**, one **rāṭana**, 20 **mattars** of blank land, 20 **mattars** of **kēsūkālu** and with the approval of Ruḍḍis of Bejavāmka, one **mattar** of wet land as **sarvābhyantara siddhi** grant. The above inscription suggests that while making an endowment the approval of the local landlords of the gift

village was felt essential by the royal officers. Sometimes the grants were made in the presence of local landlords. An inscription belonging to 1085 A.D. records a grant of land by one Gomkarāja in the presence of Karepana Viṭṭapa Raṭṭaḍi, Bōni Raṭṭaḍi, Āndāpuri Ayitama Raṭṭaḍi, Kāmi Raṭṭaḍi, besides several others who were represented as witnesses ( sākṣis ).[32]

Several inscriptions of the dynasties like Cāḷukyas also suggest such a view. The Cimbalūru grant of Cāḷukya Vijayāditya III addresses cultivators (**Raṣṭrakūṭa Pramukhān kuṭumnbinah**).[33] In this context the kākumrānu grant of Cāḷukya Bhīma is interesting.[34] According to this inscription Cāḷukya Bhīma gifted a village to a merchant Pōlayana, so that he might grant it as an Agrahāra free of taxes to Brāhmaṇas. Curiously Pōlayama divided the village into two equal halves, one of which he gave to the former owners and the other to 86 Brāhmaṇas. The inscription, according to the editors, does not throw any light on who were the former owners and why he granted them half the village. According to them, perhaps what the king actually granted to Pōlayama was, only half of the village, the other half being already in possession of others, although in his proclamation to the head of the **Rastrakuṭa** families he desired to bestow the

entire village to Brāhmaṇas as an Agrahāra.[35] This may be compared with the Cikkalavalasa plates of Vajrahasta III which state that one Mallaya Śreṣṭhin received a village from the king for the purpose of gifting away the major part of it as an Agrahāra to 300 Brāhmaṇas while keeping a part of the village for himself. Here, the freedom that was enjoyed by Mallaya Śreṣṭhin is worth noting as there is no mention of former owners of the village.[36] But Cālukya Bhīma is clearly recorded as gifting the entire village to Poīaya which does not warrant that half the village was supposed to be granted to the farmer owners. This can only be taken in the sense that the farmer cultivators were the Rāṣṭrakūṭa families themselves and Pōlaya had to concede their rights over the lands owned by them. In this connection the Śrīrangam inscription of Sadāśivarāya offers some clues. It records that one Śrīsailapūrnatātācārya received the village from Rāmarāja and Sadāśiva Mahārāya and in turn granted the same, for the merit of both the Rāya and the Rāja, to the temple for the expenses offering four dishes of food to the God. The village is stated to have been, in former times, given to the temple by a local Cōla King after settling a dispute over a stream cut from the main river. Then after a long time the village passed on to the ownership of the cultivators till the present grant was made [37] suggesting that the cultivators

could own even Dēvādāna lands, when they were not occupied.

The above discussion, however, still leaves us in doubt regarding the ownership of the donee Brāhmaṇas and the agriculturists despite the availability of a large number of inscriptions. It may be surmised, inspite of the lack of concrete evidence, the donee Brāhmaṇas and the agriculturists exercised certain rights of possession over their lands. But, it must be admitted that the main concern of the donees as well as the donors was with the revenue of the gift village. Even an early inscription like the Dhārikāṭūra grant of Śālankāyana Acaṇḍavarman clearly records that "having known the endowment of the village to the donees ( the officer incharge of the district ) should order the collection of multitude of tolls and ( customary ) offerings by those ( donees ) and their descendants".[38]

## Tax Exemption:-

When a king or a noble endowed a village to a Brāhmaṇa either all the taxes or only certain taxes that are due to the royal treasury were exempted. The main source of revenue in the Agrahāra was from the tax on agricultural land. The early charters do not specity the kinds of taxes though they

exempt the village from them. In a great majority of instances we come across the expression like **Sarvakaraparihār**, **Sarvabādhāparihāra** and **Akarīkṛtya** in the early inscriptions suggesting that the gift village was exempted from all taxes and without let and hindrance. Only a few medieval inscriptions mention the taxes such as **ari**, **appanamu**, **sunkamu**, **pullari**, **pannu**, **karamu**, and **kappamu**. Sometimes the taxes like **ardhāya antarāya**, **veṇḍāyakarāya** and **samastāya** are also recorded. [39]

Partial Exemption:-

As noted above during the early period the villages were gifted away after exempting them from all kinds of taxes. However, as wecome to the medieval period we find a few taxes from which the gift villages were stated to have been exempted. But it may be noted that even during the medieval period many Agrahāras were exempted from all taxes. The same is the case with the Dēvāgrahāras.

A Vaidumba inscription from Kalakaḍa[40] registers the remission of all the minor taxes to the farmers ( **kāmpus** ) of vēnāḍu, inclusive of **tivuḷdesas**, but with the exception of the **Dogarācapaṇṇu**, **Paḍevāḷa-paṇṇu**, **Paḍiyēri-paṇṇu** and **Sandhivigrahi-paṇṇu**. It is very

significant to note that the taxes from the which the village was not exempted were levied for the maintainance of the offices. The tax terms and their meanings are given below.

1. **Dogarāca paṇṇu**: For maintaining the office of the crown prince ( Dogarāca is a derivative of Yuvarāja )

2. **Paḍevāḷa paṇṇu**: For maintaining the office of the commander-in-chief.

3. **Paḍiyēri paṇṇu**: For maintaining the office of the Pratīhāri.

4. **Sandhivigrahi paṇṇu**: For maintaining the office of the minister of war and peace.

An inscription belonging to the reign of Kākatīya Rudradēva Mahārāja records the remission of the taxes **ari**, **appanamu** and **pullari** on the gift village.[41] The Cīmakurti plates of the Reḍḍi King Vēma records the grant of a village as a **Sarvāgrahāra** to one Cittamūri Timmana Bhaṭṭa. Besides this, the donee was granted a fourth portion of the produce of the wetlands, beatle leaf gardens and sugar cane fields, of each of five villages which were listed. Apart from this a sixteenth portion of the produce of the remaining three fourth of the five villages and the

**Suvarnādāya** of these villages were also bestowed upon him.[42]

**Total Exemption:-**

The early inscriptions, including the Buddhist records, are ambiguous in regard to exemption of taxes. They simply bestow the eighteen kinds of the immunities, or as found in some cases, all kinds of immunities on the gift villages. The taxes seem to have formed a part of these immunities ( **parihāras** ). The Nāsik inscription of Vāsiṣṭīputra Pulumāvi records that the King granted a village Sāmalipada, the immunity belonging to monk's land, ( making it ) not to be entered ( by royal officers ), not to be touched ( by any one of them ), not to be dug for salt, not to be interfered with by district police, ( in short ) to enjoy all kinds of immunities.[43] Another inscription of the times of Gautamīputra Sri Śātakarni records similar kinds immunities as bestowed on a field in the village Kakhaḍi.[44] But the Hirehaḍagaḷḷi plates of pallava Śivaskandavarman[45] clearly record that exemption of taxes formed part of eighteen kinds of**parihāras**. According to this inscription the garden in the village Cillarekakoḍumka endowed by the king " is to be free from taxes [45a](emphasis mine ), forced labour, free from

taking of sweet and sour milk, free from troubles about salt and sugar, free from the taking of the oxen in succession, free from the taking of grass and wood, free from taking of vegetables and flowers: with these and other immunities of eighteen kinds, it must be exempted and caused to be exempted by the inhabitants of the province and by the inhabitants of Cillarekakodumka".[46] Ernst Leumann translated this particular sentence as follows: " we grant an exemption from ( any taxes that might be levied by or for ) **Samcharantakas**, soldiers or other persons".[47] The Maidavōlu plates of Śvaiskandavarman record some of the above immunities. However, we donot know if any taxes are mentioned in this connection owing to the damaged nature of the inscription. Significantly by the inscription further says,"with these and all the other immunities (prescribed ) by the rules regarding all **Brahmadēyas** ( we have ) caused it to be exempted".[48] Another inscription of Śālankāyana Nandivarman which records most of the immunities except that of taxes[49] states, "with these immunities and others that have been either not written down or even otherwise stated to be included, (to it), all classes of immunities, ( you ) shall exempt (this village) and (also) cause (it) to be exempted" (lines 16-30). Similarly the Rāgōju plates of

Śaktivarman also say that the gift village was exempted from all taxes and dues. The record proceeds to say, "knowing this, you ought to wait on ( him ) and to supply to ( him ) what has to be measured ( viz.grain ) gold etc. according to the old established rule".[50]

The above statements are of considerable significance, in that they clearly show that there were established rules in connection with the exemption of various taxes and other burdens allowed to the Agrahāras. Particularly the expression "not written down" is noteworthy because, this helps us to conclude that wherever the statement regarding the exemption of taxes is not made in the inscriptions it means that the gift village was exempted from all taxes and burdens in accordance with the well-established rules.

The Rāmatīrtham plates of Viṣṇukuṇḍi Indravarman register the grant of a village Peruvātaka, having made it an Agrahāra and being exempted from all taxes and burdens to one Nagnaśarman.[51a] The Śrungavarapu Kōṭa plates of Anantavarman record that the King commanded the cultivators present at the village of Kinḍeppa while making the grant of the same village to one Mātriśarman after making it an Agrahāra and exempting it from all burdens

of taxation.[52] The Rāgōlu plates referred to above give us direct proof to the practice of the revenue being diverted to the donee Brāmaṇa that was otherwise supposed to go to the king.

During the medieval period this tendency of non-specification of taxes continued. The Taṇḍivāda grant of Prithvi Mahārāja says that the village Tāṇḍivāda was made into an Agrahāra by the King to one Bhavaśarman making it free of all imposts.[53] It is interesting to note that this inscription is one of its kind which commanded all the kuṭumbins assembled together who are the residents of Tāṇḍivāḍa.(lines 8-10) We may also notice that no other royal officials are addressed while making this grant. The Mangallu grant of Amma II[54] records that a Brāhmaṇa named Dommana received the village of Māngallu which was made a tax free Agrahāra. Here it may be noted that Ammarāja II addressed the house holders headed by the Raṣṭrakūtas of the Nātavāḍ district apart from **Mantrin, Purōhita, Sēnāpati, Yuvarāja** etc. The Piṭhāpuram plates of Vīracōda clearly mention that the taxes like **siddhāya, avēṇḍaya, abhinava, krīḍaasulka** and what is due to the king from merchants and well to do people were remitted.[55] Interestingly an annual assessment of one and a half **niska** on each of the shares, the

total number of shares being 544, is also recorded (line 180). One of the inscriptions belonging to the reign of Kōṭa Kēta II from Amarāvati[56] registers a grant of three villages to the God Buddha together with all revenue including tolls. The same inscription also records the gift of as many as 10 villages to Brāhmaṇas by the same King who exempted these Agrahāras from all taxes.[57] Another inscription belonging to A.D.1309 says that Srimat TiruvēngadanāthaMahīpāla endowed and Agrahara to two Brāhmaṇas along with the enjoyment of eight kinds of Bhōgas.[58]

During the period of the Reḍḍi Kings also both the partial exemption and total exemption of taxes may be seen from the inscriptions. The Cīmakurti plates of Vēma, referred to above, state that the King granted the village Rāmatīrtham as a **Sarvāgrahāra** to one Ciṭṭamūri Timmana Bhaṭṭa. The donee also received shares from lands and fields from five other villages.[59] Another inscription from Kōḍūru registers the gift of the village Kōḍūru by the king Anavōta to 61 Brāhmaṇas along with eight kinds of enjoyment (**Aṣṭaaiśvarya** and **Bhōga**).[60]

The same tendency can be noticed during the Vijayanagara period. It is noteworthy that a overwhelming majority of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras were totally

exempted from taxes throughout the period upto the Vijayanagara. The loss incurred, as a result, on the royal treasuries thoughout these centuries cannot have been insignificant as most of these villages were situated in agriculturally productive, well-inhabited places which yielded a substantial revenue. Also some of these were market centres and so fetched sizable revenue for the king in the form of taxes on trade, commerce, merchandise and markets.

Agriculture:-

It is well-known that the Brahmadēyas were agriculturally highly productive. A glance at the distribution of Brahmadēyas ( see the maps ) shows that in the early period almost all of them were situated in the coastal plains watered by the perennial rivers like the Krishna, Gōdāvari, Vaṁsadhāra etc. During the medieval period also a majority of the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras are to be found in the coastal regions. Thus almost all the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras are to be found in the plains generally on the river beds in the districts of Nellore, Guntur, Krishna, East and West Gōdāvari, Viśākapatṇam and Srikakuḷam. Another significant feature

is, upto the period of the Eastern Cālukyas the number of Dēvāgrahāras when compared to the number of Brahmadēyas was trivial. From the period of the kākatiyas the number of Dēvāgrahāras almost became equal with the Brahmadēyas. Another noteworthy feature is that from the kākatīya period onwards the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras begin to appear in the Telangāna region also.

As we approach the Vijayanagara period the number of the Dēvāgrahāras mounts significantly and becomes double when compared with the Brahmadēyas. During the Vijayanagara period the Rayalaseema zone also comes under the orbit of the Brahmadēya - Dēvāghrahāra system. Infact it is noteworthy that the majority of these villages are to be found in the Rāyalaseema region. ( For a comparative picture of Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras in each period see the graph ) These observations indicate the extension of agriculture in the Telengāna and Rāyalaseem regions also from the Kākatīya period, through this system.

Most of the inscriptions do not record that the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras were donated for the purpose of agriculture. But it is implied that the Brahmadēya, Dēvāgrahāra system sustained on account of agriculture, well-suggested by the fact that the revenue that was

collected by the Brāhmaṇas and the temples mainly depended on agriculture. This is also suggested by their location on fertile plains. However, some records do mention the purpose of cultivation behind them. The Cendalura plates of Kumāraviṣṇu II[61] state that a field from the King's domain in the village of Cendatūra was given by the king to Bhavaskandatrāta as a Brahmadēya, for cultivation, accompanied by all immunities. Interestingly more than half of the King's field was granted as a Brahmadēya field for cultivation. Further, some inscriptions describe the gift villages to be very fertile and this is quite natural. In the Vēmavarm grant of Allaya Vēmā Reddi[62] the gift village is described as abounding in crops, most brilliant; having groves of coconut palms, areca trees, jack trees, mangoes and plantains, laden with fruit; full of all crops, such as white rice, sugarcane, paddy, sasem, chick pea and kidney bean.(V 26,27) Taking the geographical location of the gift village into consideration it may be noted that the description about the crops etc is not an exaggeration. In another grant of the Reḍḍis[63] the gift villages are said to possess beatel leaf gardens and sugar cane fields. It is interesting to note that

this inscription also says that King Vēma founded many Agrahāras on the banks of the rivers Brahmakuṇḍi (the Guḍḍlakamma), the Kṛṣṇavēni i.e Kriṣṇā, the Gōdāvarī and the Mahānadī and laid out gardens in the vicinity of various towns[64] suggesting that the Brahmadēyas were generally located on the banks of rivers and therefore highly productive. We have an interesting description of the gift village Anyamāvara from the Annavarapāḍu plates of Kāṭaya Vēmā Reddi.[65] It is stated that with its different types of lands such as Vraihōya, Śālēyā, Yavarya and Yavya and several fine groves full of fruits, the gift village excels all the rest. It must be conceded though the land-grants dating from the Eastern Cāḷukyas down the Vijayanagara period give fairly good a picture[66] about the agriculture, crops, irrigation facilities, etc. the records endowing Brahmadēyas and Deavāgrahāras lack in this respect. Another interesting inscription from Srirangam belonging to Vijayanaga Harihara[67] orders the donee Uttamarambi that according to the bond(edirēḍu) he has given, he should dig tanks, wells and canals in the village of Naruvūru either from the money given to him by one Appaṇṇagaḷu or from his own pocket; convert the land into gardens and paddy fields and improve the agricultural prospects in it (Lines 57-89).

**Irrigation:-**

The irrigation facilities in the Brahmadēya and Dēvādāya villages are bound to be in advanced conditions as the very distribution of these villages suggests. During the Kākatīya period these gift villages were extended to the Telengāna region as far north as Adilabadad and Karimnagar districts. Similarly, as noted, these are also in abundance in the Rayalaseea region during the succeeding periods. Irrigation in these region is mainly dependent upon tanks the number of which incidentally raises high during the Kākatīya period. The Kākatīya inscriptions generally describe the tanks by the suffixes **Samudra**, **ceruvu** etc. Thus **Kēsari samudramu**[68], **prōla samudramu**[69], and **pekka ceruvu**[70], **gundlaceruvu**[71] etc are referred to in the kākatīva inscriptions. N.Krishna Reddy observes that being the native rulers of Telangāna, the Kākatīyas realised that the soil of the region was eminently suitably for wet cultivation. They accordingly conceived the idea of constructing dams and tanks at suitable points in requisite sizes in which sufficient water to irrigate the land could be stored up.[72] During this period in many places forests were cleared and new villages were

created. It appears that the construction of a new village and an excavation of a tank in it were simultaneously taken up.[73] Likewise in the Rayalaseema also a formidable portion of agriculture in the villages depended upon tank irrigation.

Though the inscriptions registering Brahmadēyas do not elaborate the irrigation facilities provided, they offer a glimpse of them through the location and boundaries recorded in them. That the water rights in the gift villages were considered very important is provewd by the fact that these rights were included in the eight enjoyments (**aṣṭabhōgasalvisampadalu**). Thus the water source(**jalamu**), is one of the **bhōgas**, the others being **nidhi** ( treasure trove ), **nikṣēpamu**, (property deposited in land), **pāṣāṇamu**(minerals), **akṣiṇi** ( actual privileges ), **agami** ( prospective rights ), **siddhamu** (the land cultivated), and **sādhyamu** (the produce of such land). One of the inscriptions of the Eastern Gangas mentions that Vajrahasta-III[74] granted a village to one Gaṇapati Nāyaka free from all taxes and with all water rights in the land. An inscription belonging to the reign of Tyāgi Manma Gaṇapatidēva Rāja from Krishna district(Ś1181) records the gift of a Dēvāgrahāra to the God Pratāpa Narasimha. The

boundaries of the gift village include tanks and canals like **Pōnkalavāngu** (canals).[75] Yet another inscription from Kandukuru ( prakasam district ), belonging to the reign of Vīramanuma Siddhi[76] says that the gift villages which were endowed to the God Tiruvengaḷa were bounded by the rivers, tanks and channels like **Indum Kāluva, Indulakāluva maḍuka, mannēru, kaniyamēru** etc. From an inscription from Mōpūru ( cuddapah district ) belonging to the reign of Sāvaṇṇa oḍeya, we know that the King granted the village Nāguru in the division Pulivendala bhūmi and a peice of land under the tank in the village Cadupurēvula in the division Mulkinanṭi bhūmi to the God Bhairavadeva of Mōpūru.[77] One of the inscriptions belonging to the reign of Vēmā says that, the donee Ciṭṭamūri Timmana Bhaṭṭa received besides the gift village, a fifth part of the income and the water of the big tank (**peddaceruvu**) from five other villages.[78] This kind of irrigation facilities were extended during the Vijayanagara period also. It is understand that without sufficient irrigation sources the purpose of the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras is itself defeated. Hence the Kings and nobles while donating villages to Brāhmaṇas and temples took care to see that proper irrigational facilities were provided.

**Creation of new Agraharas:-**

As noted above the kings founded new villages by clearing forests in order to improve agriculture. Sometimes such villages were granted as Brahmadēyas and on some other occasions some fertile plots of land were converted into Agrahāras. We learn from an inscription that a piece of land was purchased from the residents of the Agrahāra of Hoṇḍevaka(**Agrahārikas**) by the king Hastivarman of the Ganga family. Having purchased the land he converted it into an Agrahāra free from all taxes.[79] The same king is said to have converted a field measuring six **halas** into a Dēvāgrahāra for the God Nārāyana.[80] It may be noted that in this case the king did not purchase the plot. The Purle plates of Ganga Indra Varman record that the king converted some land into a village and endowed it to a Brāhmaṇa Bhavadatta Śarma.[81] A grant of Cāḷukya Jayasimha I says that the king converted the western portion of a village called Ādivāsa in Plakki viṣaya along with some of the fields of kulivātaka having converted the whole into an Agrahāra endowed it to two Brāhmaṇas[82] Another inscription of the same king also registers a similar gift. Jayasimha I is said to have created a dwelling place in Kudivāda, granted 32 **nivartanas** of land separating it from

the village of Kundūru and constituting it into a separate Agrahāra. The recipients of this Agrahāra were two Brāhmaṇa brothers.[83] Another Cāḷukya King Ammaraja II also converted some fields into Agrahāras. He is said to have cut off two fields from two villages Anamanguru and Aṇḍeke respectively and joined these two fields and two other villages and converted all of them as an Agrahāra. It was donated to one Musiyana Śarma.[84] An inscription from the temple of Narasimha at Nekarikallu, (Guntur district) Ś1254 records the gift of 80 Puṭṭis of land to God Śānta Narasimha of Nagarikallu which was converted into a village (Adiyunūrugā samaripincen).[85] The Daṇḍepalle plates of Vijayabhūpathi (Ś1332) say that the king founded a new village called Kriyāśaktipura which was adorned with rich fields, houses and pleasure gardens, and endowed to one Kṛṣṇa Paṇḍita together with eight kinds of exemptions.[86]

**Redonation:-**

Some epigraphs register the redonation of Agrahāras by the kings. The Andhavaram plates of Ananta Śaktivarman of the Māṭhara family record that, Anantaśakti Varman donated the village Āndōreppa as an Agrahāra to the very Brāhmaṇa families to whom, earlier, the village had been granted by

Āryaka Śakti Bhaṭṭāraka Pāda.[87] The Peddadugam plates of Śatrudamana register a grant of three villages located in Giri Kalinga Vardhamāna Agrahāra. According to D.C. Sircar, the editor of the plates, the gift villages are stated to have been situated in an Agrahara, the present grant may be regarded as a reallotment of the localities, Which were already revenue-free in favour of the donees of the charter.[88] The Eastern Cālukya monarch, Jayasimha I granted the village Kudivāḍa to the same donees, Svāmiyaśas and Viṣṇu Yaśas as known from the inscription already mentioned. The present inscription[89] says that the redonated village Kudivāḍa was separated from the boundary of Kundūru and was constituted into an Agrahāra. In this context the comments of M.Somasekhara Sharma, the editor of these three plates, deserve notice. According to him the three inscriptions of Cālukya Jayasimha I refer to one and the same village of Kudivāḍa. He thinks that the king granted the western portion of the village of Ādivāsa along with some land separated from the extent of the village of Gudivāda, constituting the whole into an **Agrahāra**, to the Brāhmaṇa brothers, Vinaya Śarman and Viṣṇu Śarman. To compensate the loss of the donees the king seems to have granted them again by grant No.3, thirty two **nivartanas** of

land, Separating it again from the village of Kundūru as stated in grant No.2.[90] A very interesting inscription from Srīrangam belonging to the reign of Mummadi Nāyaka says that, the gift village that was granted to one Parāsara Bhatta was enjoyed by him for sometime before he died. His mother who survived him seems to have thought of allowing the relatives of the deseased to inherit the village, but changed her mind and gave it away to the God Ranganātha taking him as a greatest of all the relatives. It is likely that the relatives began to trouble her and perhaps also to question her rights to the property and so she took such a decision.[91] From the inscriptions of the Reddi kings we understand that the Reddi king Vēma restored all the Agrahāras of Brāhmanas which had been taken away by the wicked Mlēchha kings from the time of king Vīra Rudra of the Kākati Vamsa.(v.12)[92]

The redonation of the Agrahāras was probably mainly due to the regard the donor had for the donees on account of their good qualities and continued academic activities. The kings were also probably prompted by the benedictions in the inscriptions which their predecessors issued in which their successors are enjoined to protect and continue the gift villages and exemptions. This must have resulted also in the

land. Separating it again from the village of Kundūru as stated in grant No.2.[90] A very interesting inscription from Srīrangam belonging to the reign of Mummaḍi Nāyaka says that, the gift village that was granted to one Parāśara Bhaṭṭa was enjoyed by him for sometime before he died. His mother who survived him seems to have thought of allowing the relatives of the deseased to inherit the village, but changed her mind and gave it away to the God Ranganātha taking him as a greatest of all the relatives. It is likely that the relatives began to trouble her and perhaps also to question her rights to the property and so she took such a decision.[91] From the inscriptions of the Reḍḍi kings we understand that the Reḍḍi king Vēma restored all the Agrahāras of Brāhmaṇas which had been taken away by the wicked **Mlēchha** kings from the time of king Vīra Rudra of the Kākati Vaṁśa.(v.12)[92]

The redonation of the Agrahāras was probably mainly due to the regard the donor had for the donees on account of their good qualities and continued academic activities. The kings were also probably prompted by the benedictions in the inscriptions which their predecessors issued in which their successors are enjoined to protect and continue the gift villages and exemptions. This must have resulted also in the

recurring loss of revenue to the king who extended the grants. Despite the loss, the kings redonated villages indicating probably the thrust of the religion on them.

**Migrations:-**

The migration of the donee Brāhmaṇas to and from different places is recorded in some Brahmadēya grants. The Brāhmaṇas who were well educated were sometimes invited by the kings to settle in their kingdoms. It is beleived that the Ikṣvāku King Śāntamūla was responsible for a great wave of immigration of Brāhmaṇas in Āndhradēśa from the North and the North West.[93] Some Brāhmaṇas migrated to other places for employment in the royal courts.

That some of the Brāhmaṇas from Āndhra also migrated to Tamilnāḍu is proved by the Citrur plates of Pallava NṛpatungaVarma. Out of the 54 Brāhmaṇa donees recorded in this inscription some Brāhmaṇas bore house names like Guntur, Kāramcēḍu etc., which indicates that they lived originally in the Telugu country in the past. N.Ramesan, the Editor of these plates thinks that it is quite possible that there might have been large colonies of Telugu Brāhmaṇas in the heart of the Cōḷa country during the first half of the 7th Century A.D. The Telugu titles of the Pallava King Mahendra

Varman found in his inscriptions, in the opinion of Ramesan speak to the influence the Telugu people in the Cōḷa country in the beginning of the 7th century.[96] The Mallavaram plates of Parāntaka Cōḷa mention that some southern Brāhmaṇas (Dākṣiṇatya Dvijas) whom VīraCōḍa had brought, had left the gift village since they were unable to maintain themselves with the produce and also that the remaining persons were in great distress. In the Piṭhāpuram grant of Vīracōḍa which is the original grant of the village Mallavaram, a total list of 529 Brāhmaṇas is given. The present grant lists only 284, the remaining, therefore, should have left the village. Parāntaka Cōḷa, as the present inscription records, regranted the entire village to the remaining Brāhmaṇas. The names of the Donee Brāhmaṇas are evidently of Tamil origin such as Sriranga Modaivān, Irunikkinan, Āndapiḷḷai, Malaininran[94]etc., . The Piṭhāpuram plates of Vīracōḍa register the grant of the village Vīracōḍa Caturvēdī Mangaḷa which was formed by uniting three different villages with its 12 hamlets to 536 Brāhmaṇas. Most of the names of donees are of Tamil origin, such as Veṇṇakūṭa, Karimākya, Sīralango, Malahiniya nindran etc., . H.Krishna Sastri, the Editor of these plates opines that during the reign of Kulōttunga cōḷa I, a large immigration of Tamil Brāhmaṇas to

the North has taken place. He also suggests that the large proportion of Vaiṣṇava names was due to the influence of the Rāmānuja faith.[95]

**Benedictions and Imprecations:-**

The end portions of the inscriptions recording the grants of the Brahmadēyas and Dēvāgrahāras contain these portions, the former asking the successors, royal officials and the villagers to safeguard the grant and extolling such a protection and the latter cursing the destroyers or the confiscators of the endowment. The recording of these portions themselves bears testimony that there used to be attempts of grabbing lands and also the increasing value of and demand for the land due to the population pressure.

The earlier grants generally do not record severe imprecations. Some, however are harsh against the confiscation of land. In this context, the Śarabhavaram plates of the lord of Cikura deserve mention. The imprecatory portion reads as follows: "Land has been granted by many and been protected by many; whosoever at any time posseesses the earth, to him for the time being belongs to the reward of the grant " and "O! Yudhiṣthira ! Protect the land, be it a gift of yours

or others; of highest of the kind ! protection is more meritorious than gift".[97] In another instance the gift of land is extolled and its confiscation is cursed in the following manner.[98] " There has not been and there shall not be, any gift better than a gift of land; he incurs the guilt of the slayer of a hundred thousand cows, who confiscates land that has been given and the property of a Brāhmaṇa is said to be a terrible poision ....... poison kills only one person whereas the property of a Brāhmaṇa if confiscated, kills one's sons and son's sons ". It is interesting that the Agrahāras from the Eastern Cālukyan period onwards though have benedictory portions the severe imprecations are met with rarely. From the Kākatīya period onwards these imprecations once again become harsh. An inscription belonging to the reign of Kākatīya Rudra records that whoever thinks ill of the charity of the gift village will incur the sin of killing ten thousand black cows on the banks of the Ganges.[99] Another inscription from the same place belonging to the same king records that those who deny the existance of this charity, will incur the sin of killing cows near the Ganges and will be considered to have eaten food from the skull of their eldest son.[100] Yet another inscription belonging to

Gaṇapatidēva says that those who think ill of the charity, will go to the enemy's house for begging, with a bowl made of the skull of their eldest son.[101] The imprecatory verses become highly vulgar during the Vijayanagara period, which on the one hand points to the deterioration of morality on the part of the people and on the other struggle for arable land.

**Contribution of Dēvāgrahāras:-**

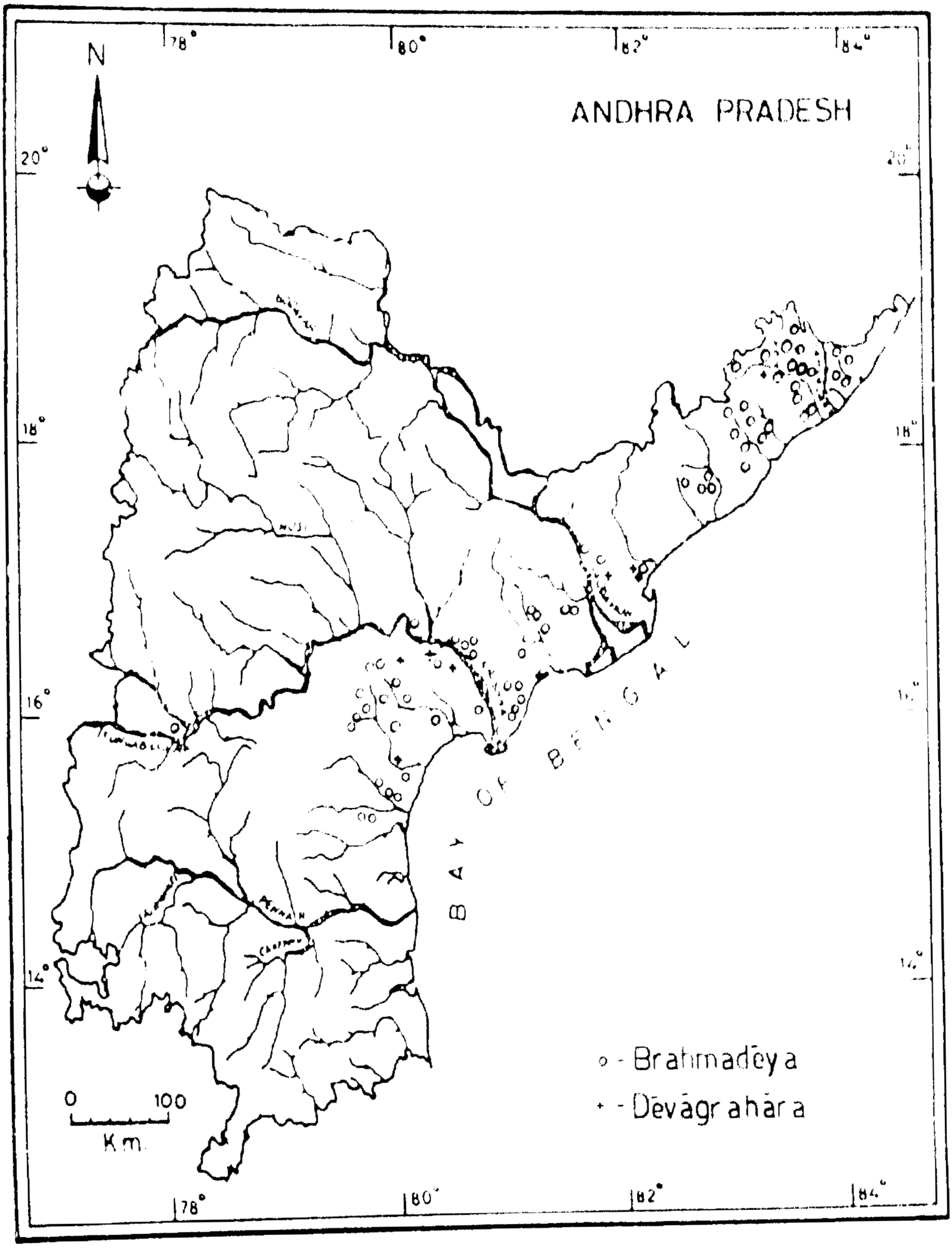
The rules, stipulations and exemptions are the same for both the Brahmadēyas and the Dēvāgrahāras. Still the Dēvāgrahāras had more economic reach than the Brahmadēyas. Another distinction is, the Bramhadēyas were directly granted to the donees whereas the Dēvāgrahāras though granted to the temples were managed by temple trustees who inturn had to depend upon the agriculturists of the gift-village. Besides, many flower gardens, fruit gardens were also donated to the temples which were looked after by agriculturists. Sometimes the artisans, the musicians, the temple girls, etc., were endowed with shares in the villages. On the whole, therefore, the economic output of the Dēvāgrahāra reached many sections of the society and in return, their rigorous participation resulted in the rise in the agricultural production.

The Brahmadēyas were generally granted to the Brāhmaṇas at thier places. So were the Dēvāgrahāras. Some times the Dēvāgrahāras were situated away from the original temple towns or villages.

The Madras museum plates of Vaidumba Bhuvanatrinētra record that the king residing at Pottepi in the Pākanāḍu made a gift of the village Kāṭiceruvu situated in the tract of Kaḍapa twelve to the God Lōkēśvara Bhaṭāra of Artirēvula. Further, the gift was entrusted into the hands of Kucibhaḍalu, a resident of Mamjaram, who was to protect and enjoy the charity.[102] Here we find that the Dēvāgrahāra had interaction with the three villages. An inscription from the Śiva temple at Palampet (Warangal district) states that Rēcarla Rudra, commander of Kākatīya Gaṇapatidēva, consecrated God Rudrēśvara in Orugallu ( Warangal ) and granted the village of Nekkoṇḍa and to the God Gaurīśa, the villages of Upparapalli and Borlapalli; and that he endowed the temples of Rudrēśvara, Kāṭēśvara, Kāmēśvara with the village Naḍakuḍe.[103] Another inscripion from the Narasimhasvāmy temple, at Inugurti[103a] says that Rudra constructed three temples to the God Śiva and endowed them with the village of Cintapalli. The Piṭhapuram

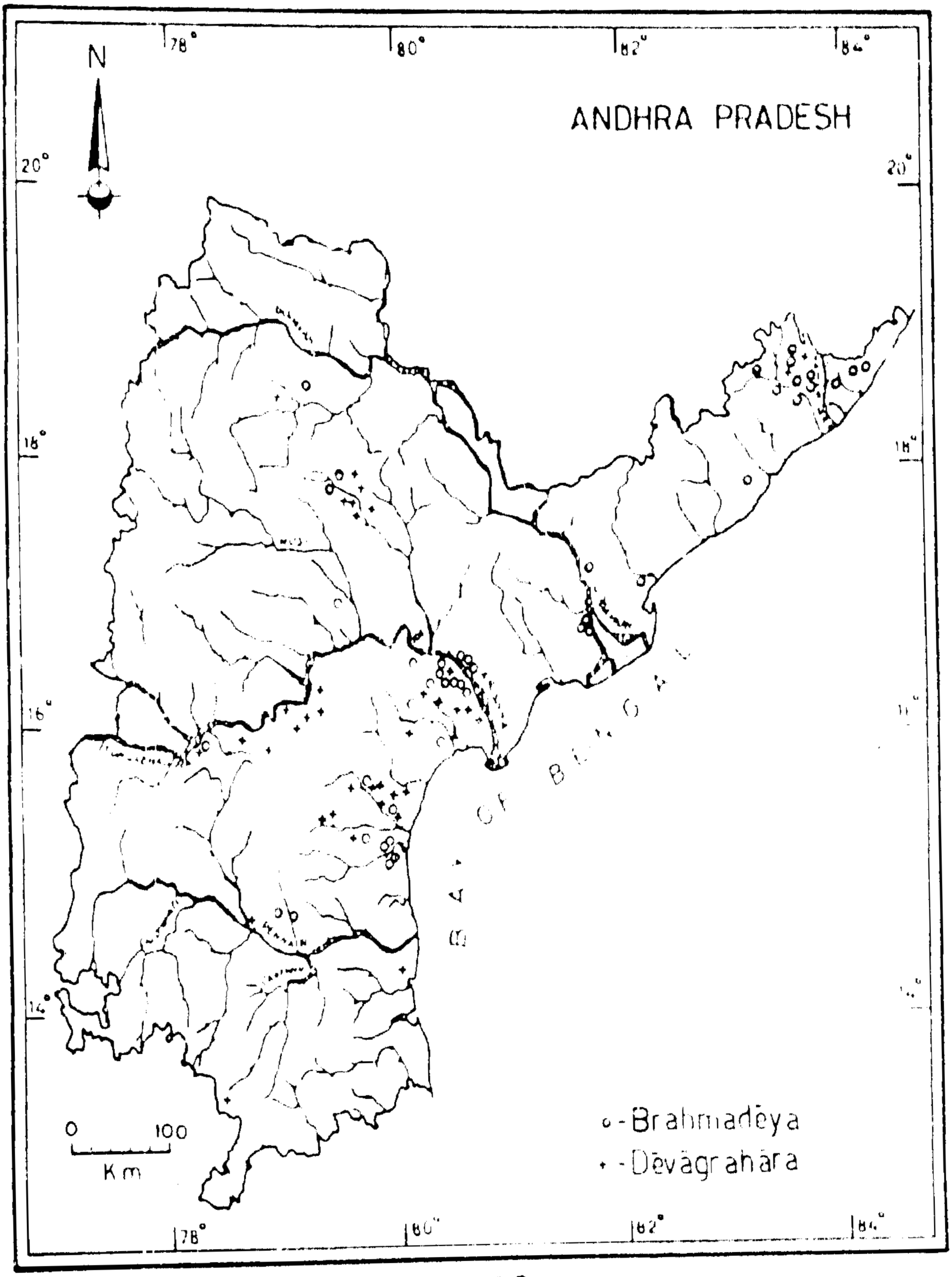
inscription of Mallapadēva, registers that the king granted the village Gudivāda in the District (Visaya) of prōlanāndu to the God Kuntī Mādhavadēva who resides in Śrīpīthapura. This inscription is found engraved on a pillar at the entrance of the Kuntī Mādhava temple at Pithāpuram.[104] The British museum plates of Sadāsivarāya give a long list of villages when he granted them being on the bank of the river Tungabhadra, in the presence of the God Vittalēsvara. It is interesting that as many as 31 villages that were donated were from Karnataka and Tamilnādu.[105] An inscription from Śrisailam belonging to the reign of Srikrsnadēvarāya registers that he granted the villages Pārumancāla and Ātukūru to the God Śrisailēśvara.[106] Another inscription belonging to the reign of the same king from he Śrīranga temple at Pulivendula records that the village Kodalkūdu in Mulikināti Sīma and Pulivendala sthala was granted for the God Śrirāngarāja.[107] Yet another inscription of Krsnadēvarāya from the Pānikēśvara Svāmi temple, Pānyam, registers a gift of the village Būdidapādu in pānem sīma to the God Pānikēsvara.[108] These examples show that the Dēvāgrahāras were sometimes situated at a lesser distance from the temples and on others at greater distances.

The distribution of Brahmadeyas and Devagraharas in Andhra from the Iksvaku period to the Visnukundin period.



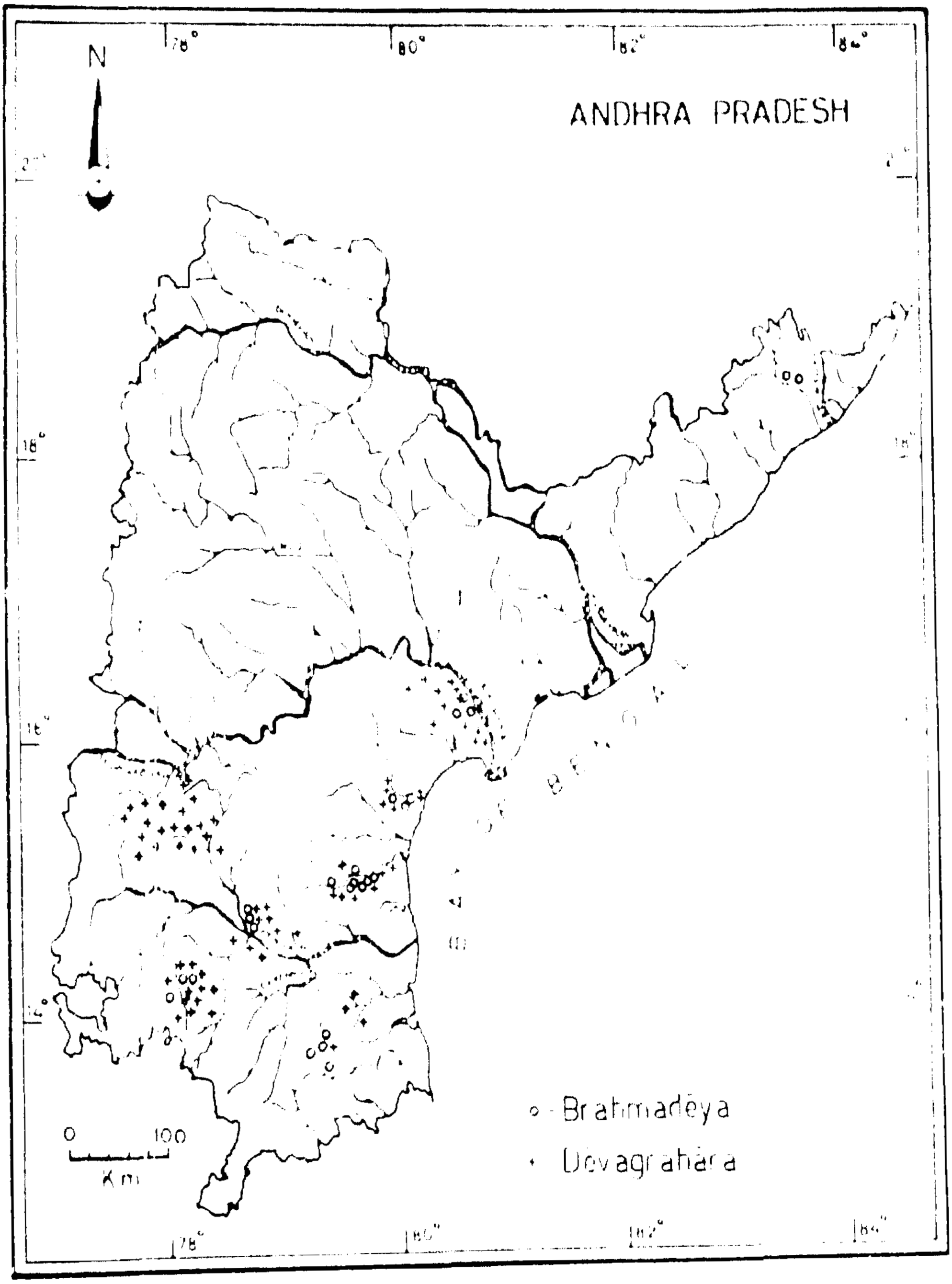

MAP-1

The distribution of Brahmadeyas and Devagraharas in Andhra from the Eastern Calukyan period to the Reddi period.




MAP-2

The distribution of Brahmadeyas and Devagraharas in Andhra during the Vijayanagara period (Upto C.1550 A.D.).




MAP-3

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


1. **Burton Stein, Peasant State and Society in Medieval south India**, Delhi, 1980. P. 143.

2. Lallanji Gopal, **Ownership of Agricultural land in Ancient India**, **JBRS**, XLVI, 1960, PP. 27-44.

3. Ibid, p.29

4. Jolly, **Hindu law and custom**, p.196 qoated by Lallanji Gopal, Ibid.

5. P.V.Kane, **History of Dharmasastra**, III p.555; also see Infra No.78 quoted by Gopal, Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. C.Minakshi, **Administration and Social life under the pallavas**, Madras, 1938, P.142.

7a. Emphasis mine.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid, P.143.

10. M.Krishna kumari, **The rule of the Chāḷukya-cōḷas in Āndhradēśa**, Delhi, 1985, PP. 150-151.

11. N.Ramesan, **Studies in Medical Deccan History based on two new unpublished copper plate inscriptions of the state museum**, Hyderabad, vol. III

12. EI, XXXII, P.178

13. 'Koneki Grant', EI, XXXI, p.75

14. 'Cikkalavalasa plates', EI, XXXIII, PP. 142-143.

15. 'Akkalapuṇḍi Grant', EI, XI'I, PP. 259-275.

16. EI, XXXVIII, P.76.

17. EI, XXX, PP. 284-285, C.

18. **Ibid**, P.287, note.1

19. Noburu Karashima, **South Indian history and Society, Studies from inscriptions, A.D.850-1800**, Delhi 1984,p.18, p26.

20. **Ibid**, P.26.

21. EI, VIII, P.233.

22. Lallanji Gopal, **Op.cit** P.37.

23. **Ibid**.

24. **AS**, II, 1.

25. R.S.SHARMA, **Śūdras in Ancient India**, Delhi, 1958,PP.156-157 26. EI, I, PP.2-10.

27. EI, IX , P.58.

28. Burton Stein , **Op.cit**, P.168.

29. **Ibid** , P.169.

30. Karashima, **Op.cit**, PP.10-11.

31. EA, IV , Ins.II,P.70.

32. SII, IV, No.1174.

33. EA, III, PP.8-16, Ins.Line.4.

34. EA , III, PP.16-25.

35. **Ibid** , P.19.

36. EI , XXXIII , P.142.

37. EI , XXIX,P.72.

38. EI, XXXVI, P.1-3, Ins.Lines.12-16.

39. SII, VI, No.1048.

40. EI, XXX, B, P.284.

41. SII, X, No.427.

42. EI, XXI, P.268.

43. EI, XXXVIII, P.76.

44. Ibid, No.4, PlateII(KSH.13).

45. EI. I, PP.2-10.

45a. Emphasis mine.

46. Ibid.

47. EI, II, P.483.

48. Ibid, Line.16.

49. EI, XXXI, P.7.

50. EI, XII, P.1.

51. EI, XII, P.136, Line.7.

51a. Emphasis mine.

52. EI, XXIII, P.56.

53. EI, XXIII, P.99.

54. EI, XXXI, P.38.

55. EI, V, P.96.

56. 'Two Pillar incriptions at Amaravathi', EI, VI, P.156

57. Ibid, P.157.

58. Nellore District Inscriptions, Kavali(35), PP.728-729

59. EI, XXI, P.268.

60. EI, XXV, P.138.

61. EI, VIII, P.233.

62. EI, XIII, P.253.

63. 'Cīmakurti grant, EI, XXI, P.268.

64. Ibid, P.269.

65. EI, XXXVI, P.170.

66. See for example N.Krishna Reddy, **Social History of Āndhra Pradesh**; P.V.Parabrhma Sastry, **The Kākatīyas**; M.Krishna kumari, **The rule of Chālukya Chōḷas in Andhrade'sa**.

67. EI, XVI, P.229.

68. HAS, 13, No.5.

69. Ibid, No.18.

70. HAS, 19, kn.5.

71. Ibid, 13, No.13.

72. N.Krishna Reddy, **Social History of Andhrapadesh**, Delhi,1991,P.197.

73. Ibid.

74. JAHRS, VIII, Parts 2 AND 3,P.165.

75. SII, X, No.363.

76. **Nellore(District) Inscrptions**, Kandukuru(63) PP.600-601.

77. SII, XVI, No.1.

78. EI, XXI, P.268.

79. 'Urlam plates of Hastivarman', EI, XVII, P.334.

80. EI, XXIII, PP.65-66.

81. EI, XIV, P.363.

82. EI, XXXI, PP.130-133.

83. Ibid, PP.133-136.

84. 'Vēmalūrupāḍu plates', EI, XVIII, PP.226-235.

85. SII,X,No.547.

86. EI, XIV, PP.68-80.

87. EI, XXVIII, PP.175-178.

88. EI, XXXI, P.90.

89. EI, XXXI, C-GRANT No.3.

90. Ibid, P.136.

91. EI, XIV, P.84.

92. 'Madras museum plates of Vema', A.D.1345, EI, VIII, PP.9-11.

93. B.V.Krishna Rao, History of the Early Dynasties of Āndhradeśa, Madras,1942, P.50.

94. N.Ramesan Studies in Medieval Deccan History, based on two new unpublished copper plate inscriptions of the state Museum, Hyderabad,Volume II.

95. EI, V, PP.70-100.

96. N.Ramesan, Op.cit, P.68.

97. EI, XIII, PP.104-105.

98. 'Grant of Ānandagotra Attivarman', IA, X, PP.102-103,Line.8.

99. Nellore District inscriptions, Darsi(1), PP.282-283.

100. Ibid, Darsi(25).

101. SII, X, No.346.

102. EI, XXIII, P.68.

103. Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh: Warangal District,No.50.

103a. Ibid, No.49.

104. EI, IV, PP. 226-242.

105. EI, IV, PP. 1-10.

106. SII, XVI, No. 52.

107. SII, XVI, No. 45.

108. Ibid, No. 46

# CHAPTER - VI

## *SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS*

## Summary of Conclusions

**Agrahāra**, as an institution was imbued by religion. The origin of the **Agrahāra** is traceable from the very early times. The concept of **dāna** and **daksiṇa** of the vedic period gradually led to the gifting of fields and lands to the Brāhmaṇas by the Kṣtriyas. During the later vedic period there is a change in the concept of **dāna**. Here, we are told that there are two types of **Dēvas**, the Gods and the Brāhmanas learned in the Vedas; both have to be propitiated, the former through **yajnas** and the latter, through **dānas**. It is also at this point that there is mention of fields and villages as appropriate items of **dāna**. As we enter the epic period the donation of wells, tanks, temples, gardens, and lands become popular. Thus the **dāna** and the **dakṣiṇa** concept of the Vedic period was slowly transformed into a village grant to the Brāhmaṇas and Gods. The references in the **Arthaśāstra**, and the Buddhist works indicate that the donation of Brahmadēyas was well known to both the Hindus and the Buddhists. The early dynasties of Āndhra such as the Bṛhatphalāyanas, Pallavas and Śālankāyanas issued copper plate charters registering grants of Agrahāras, a practice, perhaps initiated for the first time in Āndhra. This provided the

donees an imperishable record of their gift village. The succeding royal dynasties also continued this tradition

As a Social Institution, though the core of its inhabitants were Brāhmanas the participation of the non-Brāhmana populations was significant. It is more so in the case of Dēvāgrahāras which represents their participation in terms of number of caste groups when compared with the Brahmadēyas. The Agrahāra system also indicates profoundly the upward social mobility of the non-Brāhmana strata of the society. Particularly the Śūdras, first appearing as ardhasiris in the early charters, steadily progressing to the status of strong peasant groups and finally as donees and donors is a significant feature in the study of Agrahāras. The contribution of Agrahāra to the promotion of education cannot be over emphasised. The Agrahāras, since the donee Brāhmanas were academicians, would have certainly contributed to an extent, for the cause of education. But the reason for the Kings to endow Agrahāras to well educated Brāhmanas was stimulated by the religious texts. The main concern of the Agrahāra, therefore was not education. Secondly, the education suitable for the Princes, Vaiśyas and Śūdras was probably not carried on in the Agrahāras. Further, it is improbable that the people had enough wealth or leisure to

get Brāhmaṇical formal education. It may be concluded that the Agrahāras were donated to learned Brāhmaṇas with a desire to acquie religious merit, prosperity and longevity. Promotion of education due to the Agrahāra system was incidental. In the field of education, probably, only Brāhmaṇas were benefited by the Agrahāras, since the educational requirements of the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras were different from those of the Brāhmaṇas and their association with the Agrahāras as students was perhaps very negligible.

From the viewpoint of religion it may be stated that the religion was the the prime motivating factor for the cause and growth of the Agrahāras. This is proved by the fact that some inscriptions as noted record that fortune, wealth, power, and victory were given by the donees to the king as a reward for the grant. The Peṇugoṇḍa plates of Śālankāyana Hastivarman state that the grant was made for the increase of the virtue (**dharma**), longevity and strength of the King, for his passage to heaven (**Svar-nayana**) and for his attainment of religious merit. It may be noted, in this connection that the donation of the village to a Brāhmaṇa or a temple appears to have followed certain frame work of rules which had a strong religious sanction. The Agrahāras

naturally stimulated the growth of the religious sects. The Vedic religion was encouraged by the **Śātavāhanas**, **Ikshvākus**, **Śālankāyans**, **Pallavas** etc. It is interesting to note that Vikramēndravarman II of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin dynasty is described as the one who celebrated a hundred thousand **bahusuvarṇa**, **puṇḍarīka**, **puruṣamēdha**, **vājapēya**, **yūdhya**, **ṣōḍaśi**, **rājasūya** etc and thus established his supremacy. From the period of Eastern Cālukyas a steady decline in the performance of Vedic sacrifices can be noticed. Both Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism were popular in Andhra from the early period. It is interesting that the personal religion of the king did not appear to have influenced him to endow an Agrahāra to his own sect. Thus both Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism were popular and enjoyed royal patronage without any bias or favour. However through the records of the Dēvāgrahāras one may be sure to which God the donation of a village is made. This helps us in assessing which religious sect is more popular. The Jainas and Buddhists also followed the same rules, stipulations while endowing a village infavour of the temple. The auspicious occasions appear to have played an important role in promoting the donation of Agrahāras. These occasions chosen for the endowment of Brahmadēyas or Dēvāgrahāras include **pūrṇima**, **Amāvāsya**, eclipses, solstices, **srirāmanavami**,

Śivarātri etc.

In the economic sphere, the **Agrahāras** were interwoven with the complexities of revenue, taxes, agriculture, peasantry and agrarian relations. It must be noted in this context that the number of Brahmadēyas in each Kingdom is always less and that of non-Brahmadēyas is numerous and therefore the role of the Brahmadēyas in the economy of the state cannot be decisive. At the same time, the loss of revenue to the state as a result of the donation of the Brahmadēyas cannot also be negligible since most of them were located in the fertile river plains. The direct references regarding the ownership rights in the Brahmadēya system are scanty and unclear. It may be concluded that technically the proprietorship of the Brahmadēya, without doubt, rested with the king. The donee Brāhmaṇas did enjoy certain amount of liberty in reallotting lands and shares in the gift village. It must be noted, however, that they did not sell the gift villages. Regarding the peasants it may be argued that they enjoyed certain ownership rights. (**Kāṇi** rights) The peasants as **Arthasiris** must have exercised certain ownership rights. The tax exemptions seem to have formed a part of the **parihāras** bestowed on the donees as suggested by the Hirehadagalli plates of Pallava Śivaskandavarman. It is

interesting that, in Āndhra most of the Agrahāras register total exemption of taxes. Some times, the inscriptions do not say anything regarding the exemption of taxes implying that all the taxes were exempted. If only certain taxes are exempted the records should have mentioned those particular taxes not only for the knowledge of the donees but also for the royal officials, as some inscriptions record partial exemptions.

The agriculture must have been in an advanced state in the Agrahāras which had good irrigational facilities and were mostly located by the side of rivers, rivulets, tanks and canals. The land value seems to have been high as indicated by the benedictory and imprecatory portions of the Agrahāra grants. The vulgarity associated with the imprications suggests that the confiscation of lands was not unusual.

As can be expected the Agrahāras are found in larger numbers in the coastal districts which were watered by the perennial rivers like the Godavari and Krisṇa. It is from the period of Kākatīyas onwards that we find the spread of the Agrahāras in Telangāṇa and Rāyalasīma also. This was the result of the excavation of several large tanks by the Kākatīyas in these two regions and particularly in Telengāṇa. Although the temple gained greater popularity and thus

received fairly a good number of Dēvāgrahāras. During the medieval period the number of the instances of gifting away the Agrahāras to Brāhmaṇas did not decline to any appreciable extent. This is contrary to the general opinion held that with the growth of the popularity of the temples the grant of Brahmadēyas came down very much. Again contrary to the belief that the Agrahāras were donated to promote education it can be suggested that the real intention in donating the Agrahāras was to acquire religious merit, however, it is no wonder that the Agrahāras played a very significant role in dissiminating knowledge since the recipients of the Agrahāras were scholars of great eminance. The fall of the mighty Vijayanagara empire resulted in a sharp decline in the grants of villages as Agrahāras and finally this important institution disappeared.

# SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Original Sources.

**Aitreya Brāhmaṇa**, Ed., P.k.n.Pillai, Trivendrum, 1952.

**Arigattura Nikāya**, Ed., B.J.Kashyap 4.vols. Pub. Pali Publication Board, (Bihar Govt.), 1960.

**Āpastamba Gṛhya Sūtra**, M.Winternitz, Vienna, 1887.

**Āpastmba Dharma Sūtra**, Eds., Chinnaswami Sastri and Ramantha Sastri, Benaras, 1932.

**Āpastamba-Śranta-Śūtra**, Ed., Chinnaswamy Sastri, Baroda, 1955.

**Āśvalāyana Śranta Sūtra**, Ed., M.D.Shastri, Benaras, 1938.

**Atharvaveda Saṃhitā**, 2vols, tr.W.D.Whitney, Harvard University, 1905.

**Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra**, Ed., Hultzch, Leipzic, 1884.

**Bhagavadgītā**, Ed., S.Radha Krishnan, London, 1948.

**The Bodhāyana Dharma - Sūtra**, Ed., L.Srinivasacharya, Mysore, 1917.

**The Bodhāyana Gṛhya - Sūtra**, Ed., R.S.Sharma, Mysore, 1920.

**The Cullavagga**, Ed., B.J.Kashyap, Bihar, 1956.

**The Dīghanikāya**, 3 volumes, Ed., B.J.Kashyap, Pub: Pari Publications Board (Bihar Govt.), 1958.

**Divyāvadāna**, Ed., E.B.Cowell and F.A.Neil, Cambride, 1886.

**Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa of the Sāma Vēda**, Ed., Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra, Nagapur, 1954.

**Jaiminīya Gṛhyasūtra**, Ed., W.Caland, Calcutta, 1941.

**Jaiminīya Śrauta Sūtra**, Ed., D. Gastra, Zeiden, 1906.

**Jaiminīya Gṛhyasūtra**, Ed., W.Caland, Lahore, 1922.

**Jaiminīya Śrauta Sūtra**, Ed., D.Gastra, Leiden, 1919.

**Kautilya's Arthasastra**, Ed., R.Shamasastry, Mysore, 1967.

**Mahābhārata**,(cal.edn.), Ed., N.Siromani and others, Calcutta, 1834-39, Tr.K.M.Ganguly, Calcutta, 1884-96.

**Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali**, Ed., F.Keilhorn, 3 Volumes, Bombay, 1892-1909.

**Majjima Nakāya**, Pb.Pāli publication Board, Ed., B.J.Kasyap (Bihar Government), 1959.

Mānava-Gṛhyasūtra, Ed., R.H.Sastri, Baroda, 1926.

**Manu and Yājñvalkya**, Ed., Jayaswal, Calcutta, 1930.

The **Purāṇa text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age**, Tr.F.E.Pargiter, Oxford, 1913.

**Ṛgveda - Saṃhita**, Ed., Max muller, Benaras, 1965.

**Śāṅkhāyaha Gṛhya - Śūdra**, Ed., S.R.Sehgal, Delhi, 1960.

**Saṃyutta Nikāya**, 3 volumes, Ed., B.J.Kashyap, pub. Pali Publication Board (Bihar Government), 1959.

**Sathpatha Brāhmaṇa** (Mādhyandina recension), Ed., V.Sharma Gauḍa and C.D.Sharma, Kasi, 1994-7.

**Theragthā**, Ed., N.K.Bhagavat, Bombay, 1936.

**Vajrasūcī of Aśvaghoṣa**, Ed., and tr. Sujit kumar, Mukhopadhyaya, Sāntiniketan, 1950.

**The Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa**, critical edition,(4 vols.), Ed.,

P.L.Vaidya, Baroda, 1960,62,63,64.

Vinaya Piṭaka, Ed., Oldenberg, 5 vols, London, 1938-52.

Yājñvalkyasmṛti, Ed., Narayana Ram Acarya, Bombay, 1949.

Yajurveda Maitrāyaṇisamhita, Ed., Sripada Sharma, Bombay, 1898.

Vedic Index of Names and Subjects, 2 vols., Macdonell and Keith, London, 1912.

A Sanskrit - English Dictionary, Monier Williams, Oxford, London, 1872.

## Epigraphical Sources

Andhrapradesh Archaeological Series.

Annual Reports on Indian Epigraphy.

Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol III.

Corpus of Telangaṇa Inscriptions, vols. I to IV.

Epigraphia Andhrica Vols. I to IV.

Epigraphica Indica Vols.

Hyderabad Archaeological Series.

Indian Antiquary Vols.

Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh Cuddapah District, Karimnagar District and Warangal District.

Sasana Sampaṭi.

South Indian Inscriptions Series.

Butterworth and Venugopalchetty Eds., **A collection of the inscriptions on copper plates and stones in the Nellore District.**(3 vols.) Madras, 1990.

B.Radha Krishna, **Early Telugu Inscriptions**, Hyderabad, 1971.

N.Ramesh and Mukunda Rao, Eds., **Temple Inscriptions of Andhra pradesh**, Srikakulam District, Hyderabad, 1980.

D.C.Sircar, **Inscriptions of Aśōka**, New Delhi, 1967, **Select Inscriptions** (vol.1) Calcutta, 1942.

## Secondary Sources

A.S.Altekar, **State and Government in Ancient India**, Delhi, 1958.

A.S.Altekar, **Education in Ancient India**, Benares, 1934.

Amita Ray, **Life and Art of Early Andhradēsa**, Delhi, 1983.

A.Appadorai, **Economic conditions in Southern India** 1000-1500A.D. Madras, 1936.

H.N.Apte, **Taittiriya - Brāhmaṇa** Samhitā(3 vols., Bombay, 1898.

V.M.Apte, **Social and Religious Life in the Grihya Sūtras**, Bombay, 1954.

V.N.Apte, Ed., **Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra** with the commentary of Nārāyana, Bombay, 1917.

U.N.Apte, Ed., **Gautama Dharma Sūtra**, Bombay, 1936.

Burton Stein, Ed., **Essays on South India**, New Delhi, 1976.

Burton Stein, **Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India**, Delhi, 1980.

S.K.Das, Ed., **Educational system of the Ancient Hindus**, Calcutta, 1930.

K.Gopalachari, Ed., **Early History of the Andhra Country**, Madras, 1941.

U.N.Goshal, Ed., **History of Indian Political Ideas**, Bombay, 1959.

U.N.Goshal, Ed., **History of Hindupublic Life**, pt.1, Calcutta, 1945.

U.N.Goshal Ed., **Studies in Indian History and Culture**, Calcutta, 1957.

S.Gururajachar, Ed., **Some Aspects of Economic and Social Life in Karnataka**, Mysore, 1974.

B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, Ed., **Ándhrulacharitra**, Guntur, 1989.

B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, Ed., **Religion in Andhra**, Hyderabad, 1993.

J.C.Heesterman, **The Ancient Indian Royal Consideration**.

Jogiraj Basu, India of the Age of the Brāhmaṇas, Calcutta, 1969.

P.V.Kane, **History of Dharmasastra**. **Poona**, 1941.

A.B.Keith, classical Sanskrit Literature, Calcutta, 1958.

D.D.Kosambi, **The culture and civilization of Ancient India in**

**Historical outline**, New Delhi, 1989.

M.Krishna Kumari, **The rule of the Chalukya Cholas in Andhradesa**, Delhi, 1985

N.Krishna reddy, **Social History of Andhra pradesh**, Delhi, 1991.

B.V.Krishna Rao, **History of the early Dynasties of Andhradesa**, Madras, 1942.

History of Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi (610-1210 A.D.) Hyd.1973.

Lallanji Gopal, **Aspects of History of Agriculture in Ancient India**, Varanasi, 1980.

B.C.Law, **India as Described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism**, London, 1941.

S.Leela Shanta Kumari, **History of Agrahāras in Karnataka**, 400-1300 A.D., Madras, 1986.

R.C.Majumdar, Ed., 'Bharatiya Vidyabhavan Series', **The age of Imperial unity** , volII Bombay, 1980.

**The classical Age**, Vol.III Bombay, 1988.

**The age of Imperial Kananj**, Bombay, 1984.

**The Struggle for Empire**, vol.V, Bombay, 1979.

**The Delhi Sultanate**, vol. VI, Bombay, 1990.

R.C. Majumdar, **Classical Accounts o. India**, Calcutta.

C.Meenakshi, **Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas**, Madras, 1938.

V.Mitra, **Education in Ancient India**, Delhi, 1964.

R.K.Mookerji, **Ancient Indian Education**, London, 1940

Noboru Karashima, **South Indian History and Society, studies from insccriptions**, A.D.850-1800, Delhi, 1984.

Noboru Karasimha, (Ed.) **Recent Disccoveries and Research Methods in the Fields of South Asian Epigraphy, Indus valley to Mekong Delta**, explorations in Epigraphes, Madras, 1985.

P.V.Parabraha Sastry, **The Kakatiyas**, Hyderabad, 1978.

C.V.Ramachandra Rao, **Administration and Society in Medieval Andhra**, (1038-1538 A.D.) under the Later Eastern GAngas and Surya Vamsa Gajapatis.

M.Rama Rao, **Iksvākus of Vijayapuri**, Tirupati, 1967.

Romila Thapar, **Ancient Indian Social History**, Delhi, 1987.

I.K.Sarma, **The Development of Early Siva Art and Architeccture**, Delhi, 1982.

K.A.N.Sastri, (Ed.) **Comprehensive History of India**, vol.II Delhi, 1967.

K.A.N.Sastry, 1.**A History of South India**, London, 1958. 2.**The Colas** , 2nd edn. Madras University, 1955.

S.Sankaranarayanan, **The Visnukundins and their Times**, 1977.

D.Satvalekar, **Taitriya Samhitā** , Bombay, 1957.

R.N.Sharma, **Brāhmins through the ages**, Delhi, 1977.

R.S.Sharma, Ed., **Indian Society: Historical probings in**

memory of D.D.Koseembi New Delhi, 1974.

R.S.Sharma, **Śūdras in Ancient India**, Delhi, 1958.

Georg W. Spencer. Ed **Temples, Kings and Peasants**, Madras, 1987.

H.V.Sreenivasa Murthy, B.surendra Rao, Eds., **Essays on Indian History and Culture**, Felicitation volume in Honour of prof. B.Sheik Ali.

M.Somasekhara Sarma, **History of the Reḍḍi Kingdoms**, Waltair, 1948.

Vaidehi Krishna Murthy, **A Social and Economic Conditions in Eastern Deccan** (From A.D.1000 to 1250 A.D.) Hyderabad, 1970.

G.Yazdani, **The Early History of the Deccan** (2 Vols.), London, 1960.

## Journals

**Bharati**, Madras.

**Indian Antiquary**, Bombay.

**Indian Historical Quarterly**, Calcutta.

**Itihas**, Hyderabad.

**Journal of Ancient Indian History**, Calcutta.

**Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India**, Mysore.

**Journal of the Andhara historical Research Society**, Rajahmundry.

**Journal of Asian and African Studies**, Tokyo, 1972.